



LIBRARY OF PRINCETON



THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY











A  
COMMENTARY  
ON THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

BY  
LUCIUS R. PAIGE. ✓

---

VOLUME VI.

FROM THE  
EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS  
TO THE  
EPISTLE OF JUDE.

Search the Scriptures. — *John v. 39.*

---

BOSTON:  
UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,  
37 CORNHILL.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1869, by  
LUCIUS R. PAIGE,  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the District of Massachusetts

## P R E F A C E .

---

THIS volume concludes my Commentary on the New Testament. I need not attempt an explanation of the Apocalypse, inasmuch as that labor has been so thoroughly and judiciously performed by the late REV. THOMAS WHITTEMORE, D.D. Rather let me reiterate my desire, expressed to that author in his lifetime ("Trumpet," vol. xxiv. p. 82), namely, that my Commentary and his may be regarded as "one continuous work; so that, as we have labored side by side through the greater part of life, these volumes may also stand together as a memorial of the friendship which has uniformly existed between us."

Profoundly conscious of my obligations to God, for prolonging my life, and granting me strength to finish the work, commenced so long ago, and prosecuted under so many difficulties,—grateful, also, for the encouragement constantly received from my brethren and friends, many of whom "are fallen asleep," but some "remain unto this present,"—I commend this completed Commentary, the principal labor of my life, to the favorable regard of all who "trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."

LUCIUS R. PAIGE.

CAMBRIDGE, NOVEMBER, 1869.



## EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

### CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

2 And all the brethren which

are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world,

### CHAPTER I.

Galatia was a province in Asia Minor. See note on Acts xvi. 6. It does not distinctly appear when and by whom the gospel was first preached in that province; but from the language in ch. i. 8 and iv. 13, it may be inferred that Paul was one of the first, if not absolutely the first, who "called" the Galatians "into the grace of Christ." Here, however, as in other places, he was followed by Judaizing teachers, who insisted that Christian converts were bound to obey the ritual law of Moses. Against such, Paul obtained judgment, after full argument before the council of apostles at Jerusalem. Acts xv. 1-29. To correct the mischief occasioned by such false teaching was the principal object of this epistle. When or where it was written is not definitely known. The subscription, that it was "written from Rome," is regarded as destitute of authority.

1. *Paul, an apostle.* See note on Rom. i. 1. ¶ *Not of men, &c.* Not sent or commissioned by human authority. Unlike Matthias and Timothy, who, though called of God, were set apart to the ministry by men, Acts i. 26; 1 Tim. iv. 14, Paul was appointed by divine authority, as he proceeds to show. ¶ *But by Jesus*

*Christ.* That is, directly, and without human intervention. A full account of Paul's conversion and consecration to the apostleship is recorded in Acts ix. 1-8; xxii. 6-10; xxvi. 12-18. Like the Twelve, he was called personally by his Master, and in this respect he was "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." 2 Cor. xi. 5. He never acknowledged inferiority to others, and they practically admitted his equality with them. ¶ *And God the Father, &c.* He asserts distinctly, in the outset, that he derived his authority from that God who acknowledged and demonstrated Jesus to be his Son by raising him from the dead. Rom. i. 4. See note on 1 Cor. i. 1.

2. *And all the brethren, &c.* The greeting by the "brethren" served a twofold purpose: it was an assurance of Christian affection to the "churches of Galatia," and also a declaration of confidence in the authority of Paul as an apostle.

3. *Grace be to you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

4. *Who gave himself for our sins.* See note on Rom. iv. 25. ¶ *That he might deliver us from this present evil world.* Not from the wrath of God, because the mission of Christ was the result of God's love. John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8. Not to save men from endless misery in another world, but to deliver them "from this present evil

according to the will of God and our Father:

5 To whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any

other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

11 But I certify you, breth-

---

world;" or, as it is expressed by our Lord, to "keep them from the evil" which is in the world. John xvii. 15.

5. *To whom be glory, &c.* See note on Rom. xi. 36.

6. *So soon removed, &c.* This seems to indicate that this epistle was written not long after the Galatians were "called into the grace of Christ," or converted to faith in that gospel whose distinguishing characteristic is, that salvation is the gift of divine grace, not the reward of works. ¶ *Another gospel.* Called "gospel" by those who preached it; yet it was essentially different from the gospel of grace; so different, indeed, that it was Judaism rather than Christianity, — law rather than gospel.

7. *Which is not another.* "What they taught had none of the elements or characteristics of the gospel. It was a different system, and one which taught an entirely different method of justification before God." — *Barnes*. "The Judaists bring you another gospel, but it is really no gospel at all." — *Ellicott*. Hence it did not deserve the name of gospel, and was "not another." Conybeare translates thus: "which is nothing else but the device of certain men who are troubling you." ¶ *But there be some that trouble you.* Namely, the Judaizing teachers, who pretended to have authority from the apostles at Jerusalem to teach a doctrine entirely different from the gospel preached by Paul. See note on Acts xv. 1. ¶ *And would prevent, &c.*

---

Would change its character from a system of free grace to the legal code of Moses. Such was the tendency if not the design of their teaching.

8. *But though we, &c.* Paul knew that the gospel which he preached was true, for he received it "by the revelation of Jesus Christ," ver. 12; he had a right, therefore, and it was his duty, to exclude from Christian fellowship all who denied its truth; and he acknowledged that he himself would deserve like exclusion if he should prove false to the trust committed to him. ¶ *Let him be accursed.* Cut off from the Christian church. See note on Rom. ix. 3. "And if any attempt to do that, though it were I myself, or even an angel from heaven, I proclaim unto you mine opinion and apostolical sentence, that you are to disclaim and renounce all communion with him, to look on him as an excommunicated person, under the second degree of excommunication, that none is to have any commerce with in sacred matters." — *Hammond*.

9. *As we said before, &c.* Namely, in ver. 8.

10. *Do I now persuade, &c.* "By the question here, Paul means to say that his great object now was to please God. He derived his authority from him, and not from the Sanhedrim or any earthly council. And the purpose of all this is to say that he had not received his commission to preach from man, but had received it directly from God." — *Barnes*. Or, rather, as Paul



ren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

---

says in ver. 1, from "Jesus Christ and God the Father."

11. *Is not after man.* Rests not on human authority. In point of fact, from the time when he was an unbeliever and a persecutor, ver. 13, Paul did not even see one of those who were apostles before him, ver. 17, until he had preached the gospel for the space of three years, ver. 18. And when they did meet, they met as equals, neither claiming to have spiritual superiority over the other, ch. ii. 6-10.

12. *By the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Besides his personal interview with our Lord, when on his way to Damascus, Acts xxvi. 12-18, Paul received special instructions at subsequent periods, as intimated in Acts xxvi. 16. See also Acts xxii. 17-21; xxiii. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 2-4.

13. *My conversation.* My conduct; "my manner of life." Acts xxvi. 4, 5. ¶ *Beyond measure I persecuted, &c.* See Acts xxvi. 9-11.

14. *More exceedingly zealous, &c.* Wholly devoted to the traditions of the Jews. Of course, he was not likely to accept instruction from those who disregarded those traditions, and who taught a new and more spiritual doctrine.

15. *Who separated me, &c.* Who set me apart. See note on Rom. i. 1.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

---

16. *To reveal his Son in me.* To make me acquainted with the fact that Jesus is the Son of God, the true Messiah. ¶ *That I might preach him among the heathen.* Or, Gentiles. Paul was specially commissioned as an apostle to the Gentiles. Acts xxvi. 16-18. See also ch. ii. 7-10; Rom. xi. 13. ¶ *Immediately I conferred not, &c.* I did not wait to consult with any human being; but I accepted the message as a revelation of divine truth, and immediately became a willing and undoubting disciple. Acts ix. 6. "Obedient to God alone, Paul means to say, I excluded all human deliberation, as being subject to error." — *Olshausen.*

17. *Neither went I up to Jerusalem.* "That is, I did not go there at once. I did not go to consult with the apostles there, or to be instructed by them in regard to the nature of the Christian religion. The design of this statement is to show, that in no sense did he derive his commission from man." — *Barnes.* ¶ *I went into Arabia.* This journey is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. See note on Acts ix. 23.

18. *After three years.* Generally understood to indicate the interval subsequent to his conversion, not the time which elapsed after his return to

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ:

23 But they had heard only,

That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

## CHAPTER II.

**T**HEN fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

Damascus, ver. 17. ¶ *I went up to Jerusalem*, or "returned to Jerusalem," as in the margin. ¶ *To see Peter*. For what special purpose is not stated. It is reasonably supposed that, having heard of Peter as a zealous apostle of Christ, he desired to become personally acquainted with him, that they might impart strength and encouragement to each other. See Rom. i. 11-12. ¶ *Abode with him fifteen days*. In this short time he could not receive much instruction; especially as he labored in his vocation at Jerusalem, and "disputed against the Grecians." Acts ix. 29.

19. *Save James the Lord's brother*. The construction of this sentence indicates that James was one of the apostles. Commentators are divided in opinion as to the precise relationship which James sustained to our Lord. Practically, the question is comparatively unimportant to us. See note on Matt. xiii. 55. Paul's chief object here was manifestly to state the fact that he saw only two of the apostles during this visit to Jerusalem.

20. *Before God, I lie not*. Some regard this as a form of oath. But it appears to me as merely a strong affirmation. See note on Rom. ix. 1.

21. *Syria*. See note on Luke ii. 2. ¶ *Cilicia*. See note on Acts vi. 9.

22-24. *And was unknown*, &c. "The reason why Paul adds this remark can, as Ecumenius has already observed, be no other than to show the Galatians, who had been prejudiced against him by his Judaistic adversaries, that he could have received no instruction from other Christians in Palestine, and

that therefore his knowledge of the gospel was a purely immediate one."—*Olshausen*. The first verse is the keynote of this whole chapter. Paul was "an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead."

## CHAPTER II.

1. *Fourteen years after*. That is, after his former visit, ch. i. 18. ¶ *I went up again to Jerusalem*. Some suppose this to be the visit mentioned in Acts xi. 29, 30; xii. 25. It is more probable that Paul refers to the time when he had an interview with the council of apostles, described in Acts xv. 1-30. After an assertion of his independent authority as an apostle, he proceeds in what follows to the illustration and defence of the gospel of grace against the attacks of the Judaizing teachers, who insisted on obedience to the ritual law of Moses as essential to salvation; and this was precisely the subject which he discussed in the presence of the apostles when he visited Jerusalem as recorded in Acts xv. He would more naturally refer to that visit, when the subject of the present epistle was argued and decided, than to the other, when it does not appear that this subject was mentioned, or that he even saw any one of the apostles. ¶ *With Barnabas*. See note on Acts iv. 36. ¶ *And took Titus with me also*. Titus was a Grecian, ver. 3, probably converted by Paul, who styles him his "own son," Tit. i. 4; and he was an active helper in the work of the ministry. 2 Cor. ii. 13;

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was

with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by

vii. 6; viii. 6, 16, 23; xii. 18. He is said by Calmet to have lived to the age of ninety-four years. The apostle does not state for what special purpose he took this disciple with him to Jerusalem. "It may have been to show his Christian liberty and his sense of what he had a right to do; or it may have been to furnish a case on the subject of inquiry, and submit the matter to them whether Titus was to be circumcised. He was a Greek; but he had been converted to Christianity. Paul had not circumcised him, but had admitted him to the full privileges of the Christian church. Here, then, was a case in point; and it may have been important to have had such a case before them that they might fully understand it." — *Barnes*.

2. *I went up by revelation.* By the prompting of the divine Spirit; not to be instructed by the other apostles, but that they might settle a very troublesome question in accordance with his own method of administering the gospel among the Gentiles. "He went up, not because he was sent for, but because it was revealed to him that he should go." — *Jowett*. ¶ *And communicated unto them the gospel, &c.* There is no evidence that they regarded the gospel which he preached as either erroneous or defective. They added nothing to it; they did not object to any portion of it; but they encouraged him to preach it to the Gentile world; ver. 6-9. ¶ *But privately, &c.* As a precaution against misrepresentation by "those of the contrary part," before proclaiming them openly at Jerusalem, Paul unfolded to the other apostles his views of the gospel, and especially his reasons for not requiring of Gentile converts obedience to the

Mosaic ritual. ¶ *Lest by any means, &c.* Lest my labor should become ineffectual. If the other apostles had pronounced against him, his opposers would have obtained an essential advantage. It was important, therefore, to secure their public approbation, by convincing them that he acted under divine authority.

3. *But neither Titus, &c.* "Howbeit not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." — *Ellicott*. "As a proof that the apostles approved of his more liberal conduct towards the Gentiles, Paul remarks that Titus, who accompanied him, was not forced to submit to circumcision, though of Greek descent. Paul of his own accord had Timothy circumcised, Acts xvi. 3, but he would in no case have yielded to force in the matter." — *Olshausen*. "Paul might have suffered Titus to be circumcised; but because he saw that they would compel him thereunto, he would not. For if they had prevailed therein, by and by they would have gathered that it had been necessary to justification, and so through this sufferance they would have triumphed against Paul." — *Luther*. See notes on ver. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 20.

4. *False brethren.* Professing to be Christians, yet denying the grace of the gospel and insisting on conformity to the Jewish law. See Acts xv. 1. ¶ *To spy out our liberty.* Namely, the freedom of the Gentiles from subjection to the Mosaic ritual. ¶ *Bring us into bondage.* They demanded the circumcision of Titus. If Paul had yielded, or if the apostles had decided in favor of his adversaries, the principle would have been considered settled that Gentile converts were not

subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when

free from bondage, but that they were bound to "keep the law of Moses." Acts xv. 5.

5. *To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour.* Regarding this as a test case, Paul absolutely refused to yield. He would have the question settled once for all. He knew he was right, and he had no doubt that the other apostles, under the guidance of the same spirit, would sustain him in his doctrine and in his practice. He was willing, in things indifferent, to forbear the exercise of his rights, in tenderness to the "infirmities of the weak;" but he would not be compelled by others to adopt any practice which he regarded as wrong, or even as indifferent. See notes on Acts xvi. 3; Rom. xv. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 20. ¶ *That the truth of the gospel might continue with you.* That you might continue to enjoy Christian freedom. Paul desired that the Gentiles might be confirmed in the faith, and that they should cherish undoubting confidence in the truths which he had preached, as well in regard to their Christian privileges as in regard to Christian doctrine. He fully accomplished his purpose, and obtained a decree in accordance with the principles which he had maintained from the beginning. See Acts xv. 23-29.

6. *Those who seemed to be somewhat.* "Those who were held in chief reputation." — *Conybeare*. See ver. 9. ¶ *Whatsoever they were, &c.* The idea is, that while Paul gladly accepted their approbation, he disavowed their superiority over him. He would have it distinctly understood, whatever the Judaizing teachers might say to the

they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter*;

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be

contrary, that he "was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." 2 Cor. xi. 5. ¶ *In conference added nothing to me.* When I "communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles," ver. 2, they did not impart any additional information to me, nor did they disapprove my method of preaching or of admitting Gentiles into the fellowship of the church. "When they understood what I had done, they gave me no advice to alter anything, nor said any more to me than what I knew before." — *Hammond*.

7. *The gospel of the uncircumcision, &c.* The duty of preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised Gentiles was specially assigned to Paul, Acts xxii. 21; xxvi. 17, 18, while Peter was prominent among those who preached the same gospel to the circumcised Jews. Hence Paul styles himself "the apostle of the Gentiles," Rom. xi. 13. Yet, though such was the special duty of these two eminent apostles, Paul frequently addressed the Jews, both at Jerusalem and in foreign lands, and Peter sometimes preached to the Gentiles. See Acts, ch. x. and xv. 7.

8. *For he that wrought, &c.* The same God granted success to both the apostles, and thus equally authenticated the mission of both. In respect to this seal of his ministry, therefore, Paul claimed to be equal to Peter, or to any other apostle.

9. *And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars.* Or, principal supporters of the Christian church. James was the overseer of the mother church at Jerusalem; Peter

pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

was the acknowledged leader and principal advocate of the Twelve, after the crucifixion of their Master, as is manifest in the first twelve chapters of the Acts of the Apostles; John shared more largely than any other in the loving spirit of Christ, and yet preached with such power as to be styled a "son of thunder." Mark iii. 17. Together, they were the main "pillars" of the church in its infancy. Their acknowledgment of Paul, as their peer in the apostleship, was his sufficient voucher to the Gentiles, against Judaizing teachers and all gainsayers. ¶ *The grace that was given unto me.* The grace of apostleship, manifested in the remarkable success of his labors among the Gentiles. ¶ *Right hands of fellowship.* Thus they acknowledged the recipients to be fellow-laborers. "Barnabas, equally with Paul, had preached salvation to the idolatrous Gentiles, without requiring them to obey the law of Moses. Wherefore, by giving them the 'right hand of fellowship,' the three apostles acknowledged them to be true ministers of the gospel, each according to the nature of his particular commission. Paul they acknowledged to be an apostle of equal authority with themselves; and Barnabas they acknowledged to be a minister sent forth by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. This distinction it is necessary to make because it doth not appear that Barnabas was an apostle in the proper sense of the word."—*Macknight.* ¶ *That we should go unto the heathen, &c.* That we should continue to preach the gospel to the Gentiles as heretofore, while they ministered to the Jews. It is implied, of course, that Paul and Barnabas should preach the same gospel as before, — the gospel of grace, as distinguished from the ritual law.

10 Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to

10. *That we should remember the poor.* The reference is probably to the poor Christians in Judea, who were subject to persecution and the spoiling of their goods. Heb. x. 34. ¶ *The same which I also was forward to do.* Paul's earnestness in this service is manifest in 2 Cor. ch. viii. ix. He required the "churches of Galatia" to assist in "the collection for the saints," 1 Cor. xvi. 1, and the like service of other Gentile churches. His last visit to Jerusalem was made for the purpose of carrying "alms to his nation and offerings." Acts xxiv. 17; Rom. xv. 25, 27.

11. *But when Peter was come to Antioch.* The time or occasion of Peter's visit is not stated. Paul did not hesitate to rebuke him for what he regarded as unchristian conduct; and he mentions it here, to show the Galatians that Peter acknowledged his equality by submitting to his rebuke. "Besides, what he said to Peter on that occasion was exactly pertinent to the strain of the argument which he was pursuing with the Galatians, and he therefore introduces it, ver. 14–21, to show that he had held the same doctrine all along, and that he had defended it in the presence of Peter, and in a case where Peter did not reply to it."—*Barnes.* ¶ *I withstood him to the face.* Openly, and probably in presence of the whole church, ver. 14. Such public reproof would neither have been attempted by Paul, nor permitted by Peter, unless Paul's equal authority as an apostle had been conceded. ¶ *Because he was to be blamed.* It is a judicious remark, that "though the gift of inspiration, bestowed on the apostles, secured them from error in doctrine, it did not preserve them from all imprudence and sin in conduct, as is plain from this instance; wherefore, the most advanced, whether in knowledge or virtue, ought to take heed lest they fall."—*Macknight.*

the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

12. *Certain came from James.* Namely, persons connected with the church at Jerusalem over which James presided. Like the Jewish converts generally, they had probably observed the rites prescribed by Moses, and insisted that the Gentiles should do likewise. ¶ *He did eat with the Gentiles.* He associated with them, and perhaps ate meats prohibited by the law of Moses. To eat with the Gentiles, was accounted by the Jews as a high crime and misdemeanor. This had been alleged against Peter long before; and he then repelled the charge by rehearsing to the apostles and brethren the lesson which the Spirit had taught him, in a vision, Acts xi. 1-18. ¶ *Withdrew and separated himself.* Notwithstanding he had been taught of God, that he "should not call any man common or unclean," he came under bondage to the opinion of men that "it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew, to keep company or to come unto one of another nation." Acts x. 28. ¶ *Fearing them which were of the circumcision.* Either that a tumult would be excited by the Jews at Antioch, or that they would injure his reputation at Jerusalem, by reporting that he had associated with the uncircumcised, on terms of Christian fellowship. "If a man would here set forth and amplify Peter's offence, it should appear to be very great; and yet was it not done by malice or ignorance, but by occasion and fear only."—*Luther.*

13. *And the other Jews dissembled, &c.* The Jewish converts in the church at Antioch imitated Peter, and withdrew from their Gentile brethren, who neither kept the law, nor were circumcised. So general was the defection from the exercise of Christian liberty, as taught by Paul, that even Barnabas, his chosen

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; inasmuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I

associate, followed the multitude to do evil. By "dissembling," we may understand that they ostensibly required subjection to the ritual law as a test of fellowship, when in fact they did not suppose that law to be binding upon Gentile Christians.

14. *Walked not uprightly.* Dissembled, and conducted dishonestly. ¶ *According to the truth of the gospel.* The gospel requires honesty of purpose and uprightness of conduct. The apostle's language seems also to imply that they deserved reproof for misrepresenting the character of the gospel, as if its disciples were brought under bondage to the law. "He calleth the truth of the gospel both the sincere doctrine itself and also the use of the same, which we call practice."—*Assemb. Annot.* ¶ *I said unto Peter.* As Peter was first in the transgression, Paul held him responsible for all the consequences, as through his example others had been induced to dissemble. See note on Rom. xiv. 21. ¶ *Before them all.* Perhaps before the whole church, and very probably in the presence of those who "came from James," ver. 12, and many who through fear of them had "dissembled." Had the offence been private, a private admonition should have been administered; but as it was public, and as its mischievous effects pervaded the church at Antioch, a public testimony against it was proper. ¶ *Being a Jew.* That is by birth, and as such subject to the ritual law, until released by the gospel of grace. But the Gentiles were regarded by Paul as originally free from subjection to that law, and he would not permit them to be brought under bondage to it. ¶ *Livest after the manner of Gentiles.* Eating with them, ver. 12, and disregarding the Mosaic code as not binding

said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We *who are Jews* by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is

on the disciples of Christ. ¶ *Why compellest thou, &c.* "Why wouldest thou constrain the Gentiles to keep the ordinances of the Jews?"—*Conybeare*. The compulsion was moral, arising from the belief, enforced by the example of Peter, that circumcision and obedience to the law were essential to salvation. Acts xv. 1, 24. It is marvellous that Peter could have given any countenance to such an opinion, after protesting against it in the council of apostles, and denouncing the attempt "to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples" which was intolerable. Acts xv. 7-11. But it should be remembered that, notwithstanding the boldness of his conduct generally, he had a constitutional timidity, manifested in his terror when he attempted to walk on the sea, Matt. xiv. 30, and in the denial of his Master, Matt. xxvi. 69-75, as well as in his conformity to Jewish prejudices here at Antioch, "fearing them which were of the circumcision," ver. 12.

15. *Jews by nature*. By birth. ¶ *And not sinners of the Gentiles*. The Jews were not free from sin. Rom. ch. ii. But they had "the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 2, and to some extent they obeyed the divine law.

16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law*. See notes on Rom. i. 17; iii. 20. This is said concerning those "Jews by nature" who had been converted to Christianity. The unconverted Jews were still attempting to "establish their own righteousness" by an observance of the Mosaic ritual, and had "not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God," Rom. x. 3, nor sought justification through grace. ¶ *But by the*

not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if, while we seek to

*faith of Jesus Christ*. Or through the influence of belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. See note on Rom. iii. 22. ¶ *Even we have believed, &c.* Even we, who by birth were subject to the law, have renounced it, knowing that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," and have sought justification through faith in Jesus Christ; much more, is the natural conclusion, should the Gentiles, who were never subject to that law, seek for justification by grace rather than by the works of the law.

17. *We ourselves also were found sinners*. "If while we thus seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are found sinners, as we must be if we be still obliged to observe that law we have renounced as unable to justify us, is, therefore, Christ, who taught us thus to renounce the law and to seek justification by faith in him, the minister of sin? God forbid that we should charge this on him."—*Whitby*. Barnes understands this passage in a more general sense, as if the question were, if we remain sinners, or even seem to have become more sinful, notwithstanding our faith in Christ, "is it a fair and legitimate conclusion that this is the tendency of the gospel? It is not so. This is not the proper effect of the gospel of Christ, and of the doctrine of justification by faith. The system is not fitted to produce such a freedom from restraint; and if such a freedom exists, it is to be traced to something else than the gospel." It is doubtless true that the gospel has not a licentious tendency. Yet it is not improbable that the apostle in this place had reference to a specific crime, rather than to sinfulness in

be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the

general. "If, while we seek to be justified by the faith of Christ, even we ourselves are found sinners, by practising the rites of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation, contrary to our conscience, will Christ promote such iniquity, by justifying teachers who delude others in a matter of so much importance? By no means."

— *Macknight*.

18. *I make myself a transgressor.* Having renounced the law as ineffectual to justification, and as not binding even on a Jewish convert to Christianity, if I now seek to bring the Gentiles, who were born free, under bondage to that law, by pretending that it has power even over me, I am surely a transgressor. I make myself such by my own act. Christ is not "the minister of sin," for he has not required this at my hands; on the contrary, he hath forbidden it.

19. *For I through the law, &c.* "The more I consider its nature and tenor, the more I am convinced that it is absolutely impossible that I or any man living should be justified by it, and therefore I give up all such expectations, and yet the effect of it is, not my being a lawless, licentious creature, but quite the contrary: it is, that I might live to God, in a state of favor and acceptance with him."

— *Doddridge*.

20. *I am crucified with Christ, &c.* "Christ by his death hath abolished the Mosaical law, Eph. ii. 14; that is, hath taken away the discrimination betwixt Jew and Gentile, brought justification into the world for those that

life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

### CHAPTER III.

**O** FOOLISH Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth,

observe not the Mosaical law, and I, by being a Christian, have been made a partaker of this fruit of Christ's death, and so am also dead to the law; and now I am no longer the man I was, that is, a Jew, but a Christian, and am now bound to no other observations but those which Christ requireth of me, to whom I am obliged by all the bonds of love and duty, having given his own life for me to free me from the Mosaical law, among other things."—*Hammond*.

21. *I do not frustrate, &c.* I rather magnify the divine grace which bestows that justification which cannot be obtained through the law. "If righteousness came by the law," then the gospel was unnecessary, and Christ need not have proclaimed it, at the sacrifice of his life. It was Peter, and not Paul, who *frustrated* the grace of God, or represented it as superfluous, by insisting on conformity to the Mosaic ritual in order to obtain justification.

### CHAPTER III.

In this chapter, Paul addresses the Galatians directly upon the same subject which he had previously discussed with Peter, the subject, namely, of justification through faith, not by works.

1. *O foolish Galatians.* The word here rendered *foolish* "properly signifies persons void of understanding; also persons who, though they have understanding, do not form right judgments of things, through want of consideration."



before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

---

— *Macknight*. See Luke xxiv. 25. ¶ *Who hath bewitched you, &c.* Who hath deceived or fascinated you, that you should forsake the true doctrine of grace, and attempt to attain justification by works? ¶ *Before whose eyes, &c.* The life, the teachings, and the death, of Christ had been so clearly and distinctly taught to the Galatian church, that it was as if Christ had actually lived, and taught, and been crucified, *among them*, or in their presence.

2. *This only would I learn of you.* "I would ask this of you; retaining still the language of severe reproof. The design here, and in the following verses, is to *prove* to them that the views which they had at first embraced were correct, and that the views which they now cherished were false. To show them this, he asks them the simple question, by what means they had obtained the exalted privileges which they enjoyed. Whether they had obtained them by the simple gospel, or whether by the observance of the law?"

— *Barnes*. ¶ *Received ye the Spirit, &c.* See Acts x. 44; xi. 17. In the apostolic age, spiritual gifts were bestowed upon believers, enabling some to perform miracles, some to perceive and communicate the truth, some to speak with tongues, some to interpret; these and other gifts were bestowed by "the self-same Spirit," and those who received them were said to receive the Spirit. See 1 Cor. xii. 4-11.

3. *Having begun in the Spirit, &c.* Having received these gifts through faith in Christ and in the gospel of the grace of God, do you expect to become perfect by returning "to the weak and beggarly elements" of the law, and

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

---

placing your necks under the yoke of bondage? Ch. iv. 9. Grace and works are sometimes contrasted under the names of spirit and flesh. "The opposition is not between holiness and uncleanness, or good and evil, generally; but between the gospel and the law." — *Jowett*.

4. *Have ye suffered, &c.* "Like all newly founded churches, the Galatians had been forced to endure much, both from Gentiles and Jews, in the way of insult and persecution. Paul reminds them of it, with the question whether they intend to endure all this without aim and result. For if they fell away altogether from the faith, and lost Christ, then it was all in vain." — *Olshausen*.

5. *He therefore that ministered, &c.* Some suppose the apostle refers to the Giver of "every good gift and every perfect gift," as ministering or communicating the Spirit through faith; others, that he refers to himself, and that he ascribes all his spiritual gifts and power to the grace of God apprehended through faith in the gospel, and not to his punctilious observance of the Mosaic law before he became a Christian. Acts xxii. 3; xxvi. 5. Not only so, but he had communicated spiritual gifts to the Galatians, while they exercised faith in the gospel of grace, and not while they were yielding conformity to the law, through fear of the Jews.

6. *Even as Abraham believed God, &c.* Even the Patriarch, whom all the Jews revered, was justified by faith, not by works. He believed God and was accounted righteous before the law was given. Conformity to the law, therefore, was not indis-

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the

pensable to righteousness. See notes on Rom. iv. 3. "Abraham having been thus accepted and rewarded as a righteous person on account of his faith, and not on account of his circumcision, the Jews had no reason to find fault with the apostle's doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law of Moses, as a strange or novel doctrine. It was the very method in which their father Abraham was justified, and in which, according to God's covenant with him, all his spiritual seed or sons are to be justified."—*Macknight*.

7. *Know ye therefore, &c.* "This is the general argument and whole disputation of Paul against the Jews, that they which believe are the children of Abraham, and not they which are born of his flesh and his blood. This disputation Paul vehemently prosecuteth in this place and in the fourth and ninth chapters to the Romans."—*Luther*. See Luke iii. 8; John viii. 39–40.

8. *The Scripture*. The Old Testament. The New Testament was not yet written. ¶ *Foreseeing, &c.* "That is, this doctrine is contained in the Old Testament. It was foreseen and predicted that the heathen would be justified by faith, and not by the works of the law."—*Barnes*. ¶ *That God would justify, &c.* See note on Rom. v. 1. ¶ *Preached before the gospel*. "Showed beforehand glad tidings unto Abraham."—*Tyndale*. The promise was given long before mankind received any written law, ver. 17, even before Abraham himself was circum-

works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath redeemed us

cised. ¶ *Shall all nations be blessed*. See notes on Matt. i. 21; Acts iii. 25.

9. *Are blessed with faithful Abraham*. Faith in the promises of God shall have the same effect on others as on Abraham; see ver. 6. They shall be blessed with that justification which none can attain by the law, ver. 10, 11.

10. *As many as are of the works of the law*. As many as seek justification on the ground of obedience to the law. ¶ *Are under the curse*. Under the penalty denounced against disobedience. ¶ *For it is written, &c.* See Deut. xxvii. 26. As all transgressed, all became liable to the punishment or curse.

11. *No man is justified, &c.* No mere man ever yielded perfect obedience to the law; but nothing short of perfect obedience would justify men under the law. ¶ *The just shall live by faith*. See note on Rom. i. 17. "The meaning is not, I apprehend, that the man who is justified by faith shall live; but that life is promised, and exists only in connection with faith, and that the just or righteous man obtains it only in this way. Of course it cannot be obtained by the observance of the law, but must be by some other scheme."—*Barnes*.

12. *And the law is not of faith*. It requires works, not faith; perfect obedience, not confident trust. The man that *doeth* them, not he who *believes* in their authority, is justified in proportion to the perfectness of his obedience. As none obey perfectly, none thus attain full justification.

13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the*

from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if*

*curse of the law.* Hath set us free from the curse; hath delivered us from bondage to the law, and from subjection to its penalty. ¶ *Being made a curse for us.* To deliver mankind from the curse of the law, as well as from all manner of sinfulness, Christ endured persecution and death, even death on the cross, which was regarded by the Jews as accursed. Deut. xxi. 23. The idea once prevalent, that for our sakes Jesus became guilty, the object of God's wrath, and the victim of the proper punishment of sin, is generally abandoned, and should not be entertained for a moment by any Christian. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled." Heb. vii. 26. "The sense of the passage before us is, therefore, that Jesus was subjected to what was regarded as an accursed death. He was treated in his death as if he had been a criminal. It does not mean that he was guilty, nor that he was not the object of the approbation and love of God, but that his death was the same that it would have been if he had been the vilest of malefactors, and that that death was regarded by the law as accursed." —Barnes.

14. *That the blessing of Abraham.* Namely, justification through faith. ¶ *Might come on the Gentiles.* Abraham was justified through faith before he was circumcised, and before the Mosaic law was promulgated. In like manner, might the Gentiles be justified, without circumcision or conformity to the law of Moses.

15. *I speak after the manner of men.* This phrase "in St. Paul's style, seems always to mean, I use a comparison

*it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot

drawn from human affairs or human language. Compare Rom. iii. 5, and 1 Cor. xv. 32."—*Conybeare.* ¶ *No man dissannulleth, &c.* Even a covenant between man and man cannot be set aside without their mutual consent, if properly confirmed or ratified; much more, the argument implies, the covenant which God made with Abraham, and confirmed with an oath, cannot be abrogated.

16. *To Abraham and his seed.* The promise was made for the benefit of Abraham's posterity, as being among "all nations," ver. 8; but not to his posterity, except the single individual specified by the apostle. All nations should be blessed through faith in Jesus Christ and in the gospel of grace proclaimed by him. This blessing was assured by promise to Abraham and to his "seed, which is Christ."

17. *The covenant.* The promise of justification through faith. ¶ *That was confirmed before of God.* That is, by his oath. Heb. vi. 13–18. ¶ *The law.* The Mosaic code. ¶ *Which was four hundred and thirty years after.* This period is generally understood to be computed from the time when Abraham was first called, at the age of seventy-five years. ¶ *Cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.* God had promised, with an oath, to bless mankind in his Son Jesus Christ. He surely would not afterwards give a law which should make his promise void. However impossible it may be to attain perfect righteousness by the law, inasmuch as from natural infirmity all have violated its requirements, and however severe may be the penal-

disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18 For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed

ties attached to such violations, still it remains true that God hath promised, and hath sworn by himself, to bless the human family in his Son Jesus Christ. See note on Acts iii. 25-26. The law had its use, as is explained in ver. 19-25; but it surely never was designed to "disannul" the promise of God. "The apostle's argument proceeds on this undeniable principle of justice, that a covenant made by two parties cannot, after it is ratified, be altered or cancelled, except with the consent of both the parties, who in the present case were, on the one hand, God, and on the other, Abraham and his seed Christ. Therefore, as neither Abraham nor his seed Christ were present, at the making of the Sinaitic covenant, nothing in it can alter or set aside the covenant with Abraham, concerning the blessing of the nations in Christ." — *Mac-knight*. Most commentators concur in this exposition. For myself, I think the *veracity* of God affords sufficient assurance that he will fulfil his promises. See Isa. xlv. 22-24. Even Balaam understood as much as this, when he was tempted by Balak to curse Israel, and refused, saying, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless; and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it." Numb. xxiii. 19-20.

18. *But God gave it to Abraham by promise.* And therefore it could not be by the law. The law proposed rewards for obedience; the promise gave assurance of a gift by grace.

19. *Wherefore then serveth the law?* If it do not provide a way in which

should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.

21 *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law

justification may be obtained, what is its use? ¶ *It was added because of transgressions.* "To make them known, Rom. iii. 20 and vii. 7, and to convince men thereof; to discover the heinousness of sin, and to seal the condemnation thereof; thus to drive men to seek for the remedy of grace in the promised Messiah." — *Assemb. Annot.* The law was not designed to justify men, but to lead them to him who came to "save his people from their sins." Ver. 24; Matt. i. 21. ¶ *Ordained by angels, &c.* "Being spoken by angels, who put it in the hand of Moses, as a mediator between God and the people." — *Macknight*. See Acts vii. 38, 53. "Moses is called the mediator by the Rabbinical writers." — *Conybeare*.

20. *Is not a mediator of one, &c.* "A mediator always supposes two parties, and the reference to the mediator, alike in the promise to Abraham and in the giving of the law, supposes that there were *two* parties. God is one party, the same unchanging God in all the forms of the promise and of the law. In this case, it is impossible that the law should clash with the promise, or that it should supersede or modify it." — *Barnes*.

21. *Is the law then against the promises of God?* Because the law exhibits the exceeding sinfulness of sin, does it therefore prevent justification by faith, or salvation by grace manifested in Jesus Christ? God forbid. On the contrary, it discloses the need of grace, and leads men to seek for it. Ver. 24. ¶ *Righteousness should have been by the law.* The law was good; and perfect obedience to this law would have made men righteous, if obedience to any law could secure

given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

such a result. But such obedience is impossible, on account of human infirmity.

22. *But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, &c.* See note on Rom. xi. 32. None yield perfect obedience; all have sinned, and therefore all need the grace of God manifested in Christ, and are personally interested in "the promise by faith of Jesus Christ." Those who have faith in the promise have a present benefit. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

23. *But before faith came, &c.* Before the plan of justification through faith was revealed. ¶ *Shut up unto the faith, &c.* "Kept in durance under law,—the law of nature and of Moses; shut up together as criminals whom these laws had condemned, to make us embrace the law of faith, which should afterwards be revealed."—*Mac-knight*. "Shut up as a company of prisoners together, under the custody and inflexible rigor of the law, unto the coming of the Messiah, when the doctrine of justification by faith in him should be revealed."—*Locke*.

24. *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, &c.* The word rendered *schoolmaster* is said to denote originally one who has the care of children, provides teachers for them, and conducts them to school, but does not himself instruct them; but Robinson says that in the New Testament it generally means "a tutor, guardian, with the idea of authority." The law

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

leads men to Christ, by teaching them the necessity of justification by faith. See note on 1 Cor. iv. 15.

25. *But after that faith is come, &c.* Those who had believed in Christ, as a divine teacher, no longer needed a guide to him. Being justified by faith, they needed not to be longer in bondage to the law. The general argument is directed to this point,—that Gentile converts, indeed all converts, were made free in Christ, and need not be circumcised nor keep the law of Moses in order to justification. Acts xv. 1, 5, 24.

26, 27. *For ye are all the children of God by faith, &c.* "Believers, therefore, can no longer be under the law, because they are the sons of God, and they are such, because all those baptized have put on Christ."—*Olshausen*.

28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, &c.* As male and female comprehend the whole human family, so the other two phrases "Jew nor Greek," "bond nor free," are equally comprehensive. See note on Rom. i. 16. The idea is, that all Christians, of whatever nation or condition in life, are equally the children of God, equally free from bondage, entitled to equal privileges as disciples of Christ, and equally sharers in the hope of immortal life, and purity, and blessedness.

29. *Heirs according to the promise.* See note on Acts iii. 25; Rom. viii. 17. The argument is, if ye be Christ's, if ye

## CHAPTER IV.

**N**OW I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage

have that faith in him which truly unites you to him as disciples, ye are characteristically the seed or children of Abraham, "the father of the faithful," and heirs according to the promise. And if ye thus inherit by promise, and receive justification through faith, ye surely need not subject yourselves to bondage, and seek for justification by obedience to the law. By the deeds of the law, no flesh can be justified. "It is not by the obedience of the law; it is by faith, in the same way that Abraham possessed the blessing: an arrangement *before* the giving of the law, and therefore one that may include *all*, whether Jews or Gentiles. All are on a level; and all are alike the children of God, and in the same manner, and on the same terms, that Abraham was."—*Barnes*.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. *Differeth nothing from a servant, &c.* This is to be understood with the necessary limitations. The son or heir differs from a servant in many respects, such as his opportunities for mental improvement, his prospects for the future, and the like; but as to the present control and absolute enjoyment of the inheritance, — for this is the special subject of which the apostle treats, — the heir "differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all," or the legal heir to the whole estate.

2. *But is under tutors and governors.* Under government and restraint. The terms here used convey an idea similar to that which occurs in ch. iii. 24. Children and servants had not absolute freedom of action, but were

under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit

subject to the will of their superiors.

¶ *Until the time appointed, &c.* "Probably this was a time before appointed in his father's testament, at which the son was to take possession of the inheritance; consequently the father is supposed by the apostle to have been dead. This shows the propriety of placing the heir under tutors and stewards, which is the only circumstance intended to be illustrated by the similitude." — *Macknight*.

3. *Were in bondage.* This is said specially of the Jews, who were born subject to the Mosaic law. ¶ *Under the elements of the world.* Called "beggary elements," ver. 9. The reference is to the law of rites and ordinances, to which the Judaizers insisted that the Gentiles should become subject; called "of the world," because not permanent, but transitory.

4, 5. *But when the fulness of the time was come, &c.* "But when that time was come, ver. 2, wherein God saw it fit to remove the guardian of the heir, that is, to lay the Mosaic law aside, then God sent his own Son in human flesh, who submitted to and performed the whole law, to redeem us out of that slavery of Mosaic performances, and to receive us into participation of the promises made to Abraham, that is, to justification without those legal observances; and he, at his parting from the world, finally removed all those obligations from the Christians' shoulders, nailed those ordinances to his cross, abolished them by his death. Eph. ii. 14," &c. — *Hammond*.

6. *And because ye are sons, &c.* See note on Rom. viii. 15.

of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

7. *And if a son, then an heir, &c.* See note on Rom. viii. 17.

8, 9. *When ye knew not God, &c.*

"Paul might have here closed his doctrinal discussion, the relation of the law and the gospel being completely developed. But his zeal is yet unsatisfied; he addresses himself anew to the Galatians, just as he did iii. 1, seq., reminds them of their former condition and their former experiences, and finally, iv. 21, seq., proceeds to yet another consideration of the great question from a completely different point of view. He reminds them first (ver. 8, 9) of their former Gentile life, whence it appears that at least the greater number by far of the Galatian Christians were formerly Gentiles, who, however, might perhaps, as proselytes of righteousness or of the Gate, have become acquainted with the Old Testament. The knowledge of the one true God, which came to them by Christianity, delivered them from that false faith. Now, Paul proves from this contrasting of their earlier unconverted and present converted state, how contradictory, how unnatural, it would be, if *they*, who were delivered by Christ, should betake themselves to another form of slavery, namely, that under the yoke of the law, the weak and beggarly rudiments of religious life." — *Olshausen*.

10. *Ye observe days, &c.* The festivals prescribed by the Jewish ritual. They observed these, because the

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*; for I *am* as ye *are*: ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus.

Judaizing teachers required it, in opposition to the gospel of liberty proclaimed by Paul.

11. *Labor in vain.* As they had departed from his instructions, and had become again in bondage to the law from which he had assured them Christ had made them free, — even though they did so under duress, or through fear of "the circumcision," and under the influence of the dissembling Jews, ch. ii. 12, 13, — he feared that all his labors on their behalf would be unprofitable.

12. *Be as I am, &c.* Among the great variety of interpretations given of this passage by commentators, the following seems as reasonable as any: "Brethren, be still as affectionate to me as I am to you, and count me not your enemy because I tell you the truth; for I am still as affectionate to you as ever ye were to me, ver. 14. I do not look upon you as persons who have done anything with an intent to injure me; and though your false teachers have done you this injury by their pernicious doctrines, yet have they not prevailed on you to speak evil of me, or act injuriously towards me." — *Whitby*.

13. *You know how, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. ii. 3, 4; 2 Cor. x. 10.

14. *And my temptation, &c.* Probably some bodily weakness. See note on 2 Cor. xii 7. ¶ *Angel of God.* A divine messenger. ¶ *Even as Christ Jesus.* You gave credit to my mes-

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

---

sage as readily as if Christ Jesus himself had addressed you.

15. *Where then, &c., or What then,* as in the margin. There is nothing in the Greek answering to the words *ye spake of*, and they obscure the sense. The phrase may be understood not as a question, but as an exclamation: "What blessedness you then enjoyed!" Thus Tyndale translates, "How happy were you then!" ¶ *Ye would have plucked out your own eyes, &c.* They would have submitted to the most painful sacrifices to promote his comfort, as an expression of their thankfulness for the benefits which he had bestowed on them. Some suppose the apostle here intimates that his *temptation* or infirmity in the flesh was an imperfection in his eyesight; his converts would have given him *their* eyes to supply the deficiency in his own. But this is merely a supposition, perhaps altogether fanciful.

16. *Am I therefore become your enemy, &c.* The Judaizers probably represented him as the enemy of souls, because he repudiated those forms and ceremonies which they professed to regard as absolutely essential to salvation.

17. *They zealously affect you, &c.* They ardently love you. "The teachers who have seduced you pretend that they love you ardently; but they do not love you honorably; for they wish to exclude me, your spiritual father, from your affection, that ye may love them ardently, as the only faithful teachers of the gospel."—

18 But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

---

*Macknight.* See note on 1 Cor. xii. 31.

18. *But it is good, &c.* You should remember that your love for me should be ardent always, and not merely while I am present in body.

19. *I travail in birth again, &c.* Paul suffered much while laboring to convert the Galatians; so much that he compares it to the pangs of childbirth. He says that he now suffers in like manner, in the effort to reclaim them from their backsliding, and to induce them to embrace Christ in their hearts instead of relying on forms and ceremonies for justification.

20. *I stand in doubt of you.* Or, *I am perplexed for you*, as in the margin. He knew not precisely how extensively the defection from the truth had prevailed, nor how entirely any of the Galatians were brought under bondage to the law. He would gladly be present, that his language might be exactly fitted to each individual case.

21. *Do ye not hear the law?* "The argument the apostle is going to use, being taken from the law of Moses, was urged with much propriety, not only against the Judaizers who affirmed that obedience to the law of Moses was necessary to men's salvation, but against those Gentiles also whom the Judaizers had seduced to receive the law. For if the apostle made it evident from the law of Moses itself, that Abraham's children by faith were free from the bondage of the law, no further argument was necessary to prove that obedience to



22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman.

23 But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman *was* by promise.

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the

mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not;

the law is not necessary to justification." — *Macknight*.

22. *Two sons, the one by a bondmaid.* Ishmael, the son of Hagar. Gen. xvi. 3, 15. ¶ *The other by a free woman.* Isaac, the son of Sarah. Gen. xxi. 2, 3. Abraham had other sons, Gen. xxv. 1-6; but the special reference is to Ishmael and Isaac, whose condition illustrated the apostle's idea.

23. *Was born after the flesh.* According to the ordinary course of nature. ¶ *Was by promise.* Out of the ordinary course of nature, and in consequence of divine interposition. See Gen. xviii. 10; xxi. 1-3; Heb. xi. 11-12; and notes on Rom. iv. 18, 19.

24. *Which things are an allegory.* That is, an allegorical representation of the difference between a state of bondage and a state of freedom. "This allegory has given great perplexity to expositors, and, in some respects, it is attended with real difficulty. An examination of the difficulties will be found in the larger commentaries. My object, without examining the expositions which have been proposed, will be to state, in as few words as possible, the simple meaning and design of the allegory. The design it is not difficult to understand. It is to show the effect of being under the bondage or servitude of the Jewish law, compared with the freedom which the gospel imparts. Paul had addressed the Galatians, as having a real desire to be under bondage, or to be servants. He had represented Christianity as a state of freedom, and Christians as the sons of God, — not servants, but freemen. To show the difference of the two conditions, he

appeals to two cases which would furnish a striking illustration of them. The one was the case of Hagar and her son. The effect of bondage was well illustrated there. She and her son were treated with severity, and were cast out and persecuted. This was a fair illustration of bondage under the law; of the servitude to the laws of Moses; and was a fit representation of Jerusalem as it was in the time of Paul. The other case was that of Isaac. He was the son of a free woman, and was treated accordingly. He was regarded as a son, not as a servant, and he was a fair illustration of the case of those who were made free by the gospel. They enjoyed a similar freedom and sonship, and should not seek a state of servitude or bondage. The condition of Isaac was a fit illustration of the new Jerusalem, the heavenly city, the true kingdom of God." — *Barnes*.

25. *This Agar is mount Sinai.* That is, this Hagar, as she is called in Genesis, represents Mount Sinai, figuratively put for the law which was there delivered to Moses. See note on Matt. xxvi. 26. ¶ *Answereth to.* "Is in the same rank with," as translated in the margin. ¶ *In bondage.* Namely to the law.

26. *Jerusalem which is above.* A figurative expression, denoting the Christian church. ¶ *Is free.* Namely from bondage to the law. ¶ *Mother of us all.* Of all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles. All are equally children of the promise.

27. *For it is written, &c.* This phrase is found in Isa. liv. 1, and is quoted by the apostle to illustrate his idea that

break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband.

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

"the fulness of the Gentiles" would exceed the number of "all Israel." Rom. xi. 25, 26.

28. *Children of promise.* See note on ch. iii. 29.

29. *After the Spirit.* Equivalent to "by promise" in ver. 23. ¶ *Even so it is now.* Almost if not quite all the persecutions of Christians recorded in the Acts of the Apostles were incited by the Jews, the children of bondage. The persecution of Isaac by Ishmael was perhaps no more than is indicated in Gen. xxi. 8, 9.

30. *Cast out the bondwoman, &c.* See Gen. xxi. 10. "Though the Judaizers should persecute and hate them, yet the issue would be that Judaism would sink, and wither, and perish; but true Christianity should flourish and last forever."—*Henry.*

31. *We are not children of the bondwoman, &c.* We are not under bondage to the law, but are free men in Christ. Ch. v. 1. "It is the birthright of Christians to think, and feel, and act, like free men, and they should not allow themselves to become the slaves of customs, and rites, and ceremonies, but should feel that they are the adopted children of God."—*Barnes.*

#### CHAPTER V.

1. *Stand fast, &c.* Maintain your liberty like men, and be not brought by the Judaizers under bondage to the

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

#### CHAPTER V.

**S**TAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

law. Christ hath made you free; let no one again enslave you. This verse properly belongs to the foregoing chapter.

2. *Behold I, Paul, &c.* The apostle is supposed to speak thus emphatically, because he had himself been "circumcised the eighth day," Phil. iii. 5, and was falsely represented by the Judaizers as still favoring circumcision, ver. 11. ¶ *If ye be circumcised, &c.* This must be understood with the proper limitation to the subject under discussion. Paul surely did not mean that the whole Jewish nation were excluded from *profit*, because they had been circumcised in infancy; for all the apostles and the earliest disciples of Christ, and even the Master himself, had been thus circumcised. Nor could he mean that such exclusion followed the circumcision of adults, under *all* circumstances; for he had thus circumcised Timothy, his favorite disciple. Acts xvi. 3. But to be circumcised, as the Judaizers required, under the belief that such conformity to the Jewish law was essential to salvation, would be equivalent to a rejection of Christ, and of that liberty which was characteristic of his gospel.

3. *He is a debtor, &c.* Whoever submitted to circumcision *because* it was required by the Mosaic law, thereby acknowledged his subjection to that law, and his obligation to obey all its requirements.

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

7 Ye did run well; who did

hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8 This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you.

9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

11 And I, brethren, if I yet

4. *Christ is become of no effect, &c.* If you rely on the works of the law for justification, you cannot, at the same time, rely on the gracious promise revealed by Christ. Justification through faith is incompatible with legal justification. See note on Rom. iv. 14. "It is vain for you to attempt to unite the two systems. You must have the law and no Christ, or Christ and no law, for your justification."—*Clarke*. ¶ *Are justified by the law.* Not that any were actually thus justified; see Rom. iii. 20; but if any could be thus justified, they would not need Christ; and those who thus sought justification renounced or were unconscious of any such need. ¶ *Ye are fallen from grace.* That is, from that condition of freedom to which ye were admitted by grace. Ye fall back from Christian freedom into bondage to the law.

5. *For we through the Spirit wait, &c.* "For we, according to the gospel, and the promise made to Abraham, expect to be justified without legal performances, only by faith or evangelical obedience."—*Hammond*.

6. *Neither circumcision, &c.* Under the dispensation of grace it is wholly immaterial whether a man be circumcised or not. He is neither the better nor the worse for conformity or non-conformity to this rite. See note on 1 Cor. vii. 18. ¶ *Faith which worketh by love.* A living faith which produces love to God as a gracious Father, and to all men as brethren, children of the same Father.

7. *Ye did run well, &c.* Ye gladly embraced the gospel, and rejoiced in its gracious promises, ch. iv. 15; who

has influenced you to abandon your hope of justification through faith, and to turn back to the bondage of the law?

8. *This persuasion cometh not, &c.* This persuasion that conformity to the law is essential to salvation certainly cometh not from God, who hath called you from idolatry into the kingdom of his dear Son.

9. *A little leaven, &c.* This change in your opinions has been produced by "a few false teachers among you that have infected you with this sour, false doctrine of Judaizing, which will spoil all your Christianity. Ver. 2, 4."—*Hammond*. The phrase used here is evidently proverbial. See note on 1 Cor. v. 6. It indicates that important results, whether good or evil, often follow apparently slight causes.

10. *I have confidence, &c.* Though they had been led astray by the false teachers, yet the apostle had confidence that his brethren would give heed to his exhortation and cast off the yoke of bondage. ¶ *He that troubleth you, &c.* Whoever has infected you with the leaven of the law must abide the consequence. See ver. 12.

11. *If I preach circumcision, &c.* If I enjoin it on the Gentiles, as a duty. The Judaizers seem to have asserted this concerning Paul, notwithstanding his constant protest against it. ¶ *Why do I yet suffer, &c.* Instead of denying the charge, he appeals to a notorious fact in proof of its falsity. Why should the Jews continue to persecute him, if they really believed he enjoined circumcision and conformity to the law? ¶ *Then is the offence of the cross ceased.* The offence

preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*, Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you

---

was that the gospel taught a method of justification by grace without the works of the law; but if those works were insisted on, then the offence ceased to exist.

12. *I would they were even cut off, &c.* "That is, as I understand it, from the communion of the church. So far am I, says Paul, from agreeing with them, and preaching the necessity of circumcision as they do, that I sincerely wish they were excluded from the church as unworthy a place among the children of God."—*Barnes*.

13. *Ye have been called unto liberty.* Freedom from bondage to the law. ¶ *Only use not liberty, &c.* "Because men are very apt to abuse their liberty and turn the grace of Christ into wantonness, he addeth here as elsewhere, a wholesome caution that Christian liberty is not a license to do what men list, but a freedom from the heavy yoke of the law; to the end that they may take upon them Christ's easy yoke and light burden, and more cheerfully serve him."—*Assemb. Annot.* See Luke i. 74; Rom. vi. 1; viii. 1; Tit. ii. 11, 12. ¶ *But by love serve one another.* Your liberty does not absolve you from the duty of loving one another.

---

14. *For all the law, &c.* See notes on Matt. xxii. 40; Rom. xiii. 9.

15. *But if ye bite, &c.* If ye disobey the law of love and allow yourselves to injure others, you must expect like injurious treatment from them.

16. *Walk in the Spirit, &c.* "Here Paul returns to the first rule, ver. 13, and shows the way how it is to be observed thus: 'If ye walk in the Spirit, ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; and when the lusts of the flesh are not fulfilled, there shall not occasion be given to the flesh by the use of Christian liberty.'"—*Perkins*.

17. *For the flesh lusteth, &c.* See notes on Rom. viii. 5–7. ¶ *So that ye cannot do, &c.* "So that ye do not the things which ye would."—*Haweis*. "Not 'so that you cannot,' but tending to prevent you from."—*Conybeare*. See note on Rom. vii. 15.

18. *But if ye be led of the Spirit, &c.* "If you submit to the teachings and guidance of the Holy Spirit, you are free from the restraints and control of the Mosaic law, and are under the control of the Spirit of God."—*Barnes*.

19–21. *Now the works of the flesh, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. vi. 9–11, where similar phraseology occurs, and a meth-

in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.

od of purification is declared. See also note on Rom. vi. 6.

22, 23. *But the fruit of the Spirit, &c.* "But the fruit which reason enlightened by the Spirit of God produceth is love to God and man; joy occasioned by that excellent affection; peace with all men; the patient bearing of injuries; a soft and sweet manner of speaking; a beneficent disposition; fidelity in engagements, promises, and trusts; calmness under provocations; temperance in the use of meats and drinks. In praise of these virtues, I observe that there never was any law or religion by which they were prohibited, or the persons punished who practised them."—*Macknight*.

24. *Have crucified the flesh, &c.* See note on Rom. vi. 6.

25. *If we live in the Spirit, &c.* If we enjoy the blessings which the Spirit communicates, let us also obey all its promptings to righteousness. See notes on Rom. viii. 4, 5.

26. *Vainglory.* Pride of birth, or property, or station. Perhaps the reference here may be to spiritual pride, manifested by those who conformed to the law, and insisted that others should do likewise. ¶ *Provoking one another.* Pride, haughtiness, superciliousness, is not only disgusting, but provoking; it stirs up ill blood. ¶ *Envying one another.* Those who are *vainglorious* naturally envy those who may seem to excel them in

## CHAPTER VI.

**B**RETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he

any respect whatever. A spirit of humility, founded on the belief that all are the children of God and equally dear in his sight, will preserve us from a provoking and foolish vainglory on the one hand, and from an uncomfortable and irritating envy on the other.

## CHAPTER VI.

1. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken, &c.* "If any man be fallen by chance into any fault."—*Tyndale*. "If a man be surprised into any act of offence."—*Haweis*. The word rendered *overtaken* does not indicate a wilful, deliberate act; but rather such acts as result from sudden temptation. In such cases, those who are spiritual, ch. v. 18, should deal tenderly with the offender; or "you that are governors in the churches shall do well not to exercise too great severity on him, but either to regain him by friendly advice, or else, upon sight of his contrition, restore him to the peace of the church again, considering how possible it is that thou also thyself mayest fall into the like sin in time of temptation."—*Hammond*.

2. *Bear ye one another's burdens.* See note on Rom. xv. 1. ¶ *The law of Christ.* See John xiii. 14, 15, 34, 35.

3. *He deceiveth himself.* The vainglorious man, ch. v. 26, is not wise, but deceives himself. See note on 2 Cor. x. 12.

4. *But let every man prove his own*

have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

*work.* Let us compare our actions with our duty, — our conduct towards others with the divine law of love, — and “if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” 1 John iii. 21.

5. *For every man shall bear his own burden.* “For you shall answer for no man’s sins but your own, and therefore need not busy yourselves about other men’s actions, but only your own.” — *Hammond.*

6. *Let him that is taught in the word, &c.* See notes on Rom. xv. 27; 1 Cor. ix. 11.

7. *God is not mocked.* “God cannot be defrauded.” — *Conybeare.* “God is not to be trifled with.” — *Haweis.* ¶ *Whatsoever a man soweth, &c.* The expression is proverbial. The idea is, that every man shall be rewarded according to his works. Many commentators understand that special reference is had, in ver. 7–10, to the provision for the ministry mentioned in ver. 6. Whitby says the language is so understood “by most interpreters;” but he did not agree with them. For example: ver. 7. “For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. All these things tend to this purpose, that ministers should be nourished and maintained;” — ver. 8. “He addeth a similitude and an allegory. And this general sentence of sowing he applieth to the particular matter of nourishing and maintaining the ministers of the word, saying, he that soweth in the Spirit, that is, he that cherisheth the teachers of God’s word,” &c. — *Luther.* “This metaphor of sowing doth elsewhere signify all the moral actions of a man’s life, whether they be good or evil. Prov. xi. 18; xxii. 8. But here Paul restrains it to those good works of liberality which are performed in the maintenance of the ministry.” — *Per-*

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to

*kins.* “Be properly observant of the wants of your teachers. God requires this mark of sincerity; as the husbandman hath the recompense of his harvest for his seed, so shall you, from these temporal things, reap spiritual.” — *Gilpin.* Ver. 7. “To what the reference is here is not perfectly plain. In the connection in which it stands, it seems to refer to the support of the ministers of the gospel; and Paul introduces the general principle, that as a man sows he will reap, to show them what will be the effect of a liberal and proper use of their property. If they made a proper use of it; if they employed it for benevolent purposes; if they appropriated what they should to the support of religion, they would reap accordingly: — ver. 9. The reference here is particularly to the support of the ministers of religion, ver. 6, but the apostle makes the exhortation general.” — *Barnes.* It is proper to add that Barnes interprets ver. 8 as referring to an entirely different subject; but why he supposes that this new subject is thus interposed, and the other resumed at ver. 9, does not appear. “Here the apostle offers several arguments to consideration, for exciting them to the forementioned duty of liberality and Christian beneficence in general, and to the ministers of the word in particular.” — *Poole.* “He commendeth liberality both to their pastors and to the poor; he compareth works of charity to a spiritual sowing, which shall have a most plentiful harvest; and he compareth covetousness and niggardliness to a carnal sowing, whereof nothing can be gathered but such things as being unprofitable fade away and perish by and by.” — *Assemb. Annot.*

8. *For he that soweth to the flesh, &c.* See notes on Rom. ii. 6–11; 2. Cor.

the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised;

v. 10. Many have supposed that endless ruin is here denounced as the penalty of sin. Without insisting that such a penalty would be disproportionate to the offence as interpreted by many commentators, see note on ver. 7, or that the phraseology indicates that the harvest is reaped while men remain in the flesh, it is sufficient to say that no intimation is found in the apostle's language, that the penalty is endless in its nature, or that it even extends at all into the future life. Whether men shall be punished in the future life or not, the doctrine certainly is not taught in this passage.

9. *And let us not be weary in well doing.* See note on 1 Cor. xv. 58. ¶ *For in due season, we shall reap, &c.* The agricultural image is preserved of reaping a crop in due time after sowing the seed.

10. *Let us do good unto all men.* All are children of one Father, and we are bound to love all and to treat them as brethren. ¶ *Especially unto them, &c.* Benevolence to all does not exclude especial kindness to those who are most nearly connected with us or dependent upon us. See 1 Tim. iv. 10; v. 8, 17.

11. *Ye see how large a letter, &c.* Some suppose the apostle to refer to the size of the characters in which the epistle was written, as if, for some reason, he could not fashion the letters

only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

of the Greek alphabet elegantly. In my judgment, the better opinion is, that "what the apostle says must be understood of the *length of the epistle*, in all probability the largest he had ever written with *his own hand*; though several, much larger, have been dictated by him, but they were written by his scribe or amanuensis."—*Clarke*. Whatever he had done with his own hand was designed as a proof that the epistle was genuine. See note on 1 Cor. xvi. 21.

12, 13. *As many as desire, &c.* The following paraphrase substantially expresses the opinion of many commentators: "They who would seduce you to the observance of the Jewish law do it solely to avoid persecution for the sake of the gospel; for they themselves, though circumcised, do not observe the law; but press circumcision on you, merely that they may glory in having made you proselytes."—*Gilpin*.

14. *But God forbid that I should glory, &c.* Paul had been a zealous observer of the Mosaic ritual before his conversion, see Acts xxii. 3; xxvi. 5; yet he would not glory or boast, except in that divine grace of which the cross was an emblem. See notes on Rom. i. 23; 1 Cor. ii. 2. ¶ *Crucified, &c.* See note on ch. ii. 20.

15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision, &c.* See note on ch. v. 6.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in

my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

¶ Unto the Galatians, written from Rome.

---

¶ *A new creature, &c.* See note on 2 Cor. v. 17.

16. *As many as walk, &c.* As many as conform to this rule of righteousness, trusting in grace rather than in the law for justification.

¶ *Peace be on them.* See note on Rom.

---

xv. 33. ¶ *The Israel of God.* All true believers.

17. *From henceforth, &c.* See note on 2 Cor. iv. 10.

18. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20.



## EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

### CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

### CHAPTER I.

The authorship of this epistle is universally ascribed to Paul. Some have supposed that it was addressed to the Laodiceans rather than to the Ephesians, but the general opinion is, that the reading in the first verse is genuine, and that it was sent to the "saints at Ephesus," but designed for the general instruction of others also, described as "the faithful in Christ Jesus." The gospel was planted at Ephesus by Paul. Acts xviii. 19-21. He visited that city a second time, and remained there two years; Acts xix. 1-10; and his success was so great that the unbelieving citizens became alarmed, lest the magnificent Temple of Diana should be deserted; and the life of the apostle was in such manifest danger that he departed for Macedonia. Acts xix. 41; xx. 1. Subsequently, when at Miletus on his way to Jerusalem, Paul "sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church," whom he reminded of his former labors and instructions, and to whom he gave his parting advice and blessing. Acts xx. 17-38. The city of Ephesus was in Ionia, about forty miles from Smyrna. When visited by Paul it was regarded as the metropolis of Asia. In succes-

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

sive wars it was destroyed, and no trace of its former magnificence remains; indeed, it is said, that "now no human being lives in Ephesus."—*Calmet*.

1. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.* See note on 1 Cor. i. 1. ¶ *To the saints.* Christians: equivalent to "the faithful in Christ Jesus." See notes on Acts ix. 13; Rom. xv. 26.

2. *Grace be to you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

3-4. *Blessed be the God, &c.* The general idea of the apostle, in these two verses, has been well expressed thus: "Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, not confining his favors to the Jews, hath blessed us Gentiles also with every spiritual gift in the church of God, through the mediation of Christ, and that without subjecting us to the law of Moses as a condition of salvation. This he hath done, agreeably to his having elected us to be his people through Christ, before the foundation of the world, in order that we might be holy and unblamable in his sight, not by the observance of any rites, whether heathenish or Jewish, but through the exercise of love to God and man."—*Macknight*.

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved :

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the for-

giveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace ;

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence ;

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself :

10 That in the dispensation

5. *Having predestinated us, &c.* See notes on Rom. viii. 28-30. ¶ *The adoption of children.* See note on Rom. viii. 15. ¶ *According to the good pleasure of his will.* The blessings which God bestows are the fruit of his grace, not a reward merited by our works. Ch. ii. 8, 9. "The truth is, God was so far from choosing the Gentiles out of faith foreseen, that he did not choose them for the sake and obedience of Christ foreseen. God did not love us from eternity because Christ was to die for us in time, but because he loved us with an everlasting love, therefore in the fulness of time [Christ] was sent to die for us; so that the death of Christ was the fruit and effect, but not the cause, of our election; no other reason (says Bishop Fell, upon the place) can be assigned of this privilege, but the good pleasure of God; and if Christ's suffering were not the cause of our election, much less our own deservings, as he adds there, Almighty God not choosing us because worthy, but to make us worthy by choosing us."—*Poole*.

6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace.* This phrase is a Hebraism, equivalent to "the praise of his glorious grace," and it is so translated by Tyndale. The whole scheme of justification and salvation manifests divine grace, not human merit. See notes on Rom. v. 21; vi. 23. ¶ *In the beloved.* In Jesus Christ.

7. *Redemption through his blood.* See note on Rom. iii. 24. ¶ *Forgiveness of sins.* See notes on Matt. i. 21; vi. 12, 14, 15.

8. *Wherein he hath abounded, &c.* "Where sin abounded grace did much

more abound." Rom. v. 20. The extent of this abounding grace is indicated in what follows. ¶ *In all wisdom and prudence.* "There was a wise design running through the whole plan, and abounding in it in an eminent degree."—*Barnes*.

9. *The mystery of his will.* See note on Rom. xi. 25. ¶ *According to his good pleasure.* The design of God in regard to his children is prompted by his choice. Some have vainly imagined that the love of God truly desired the salvation of all; but that the perversity of many was so great as to induce him to *design* their endless ruin. On the contrary, the apostle assures us the purpose which God hath formed is "according to his good pleasure." ¶ *Which he hath purposed in himself.* God hath not suspended the eternal welfare of his children on any contingency, but hath secured it by his own immutable purpose. Isa. xlv. 23; Heb. vi. 13, 17, 18.

10. *The dispensation of the fulness of times.* "To have it declared when the time were full come."—*Tyndale*. ¶ *All things in Christ.* All intelligent beings. The following note is curious: "The things which are to be united in Christ are those which are in heaven and which are on earth. Nothing is said of *hell*. Of course this passage cannot teach the doctrine of universal salvation, since there is *one* world which is not to have a part in this ultimate union."—*Barnes*. Yet the same author says of "the fulness of times," mentioned in this verse, "the period referred to here is that when all things shall be gathered together in the Redeemer at the winding up of

of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him :

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will :

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also *trusted*,

---

human affairs, or the consummation of all things." Another critic says that "the things in heaven and the things upon earth are the widest expression of universality, designed to show the extent of the preceding "all things."—*Ellicott*. "These words discover to us the end and design of God in making known the mysteries of his will; that is, in revealing the gospel: it was to gather into one universal church both angels and men, Jews and Gentiles, under Christ their head, and by virtue of that union to become one with the Father, as he and Christ were one."—*Poole*. See John xii. 32. Here, as elsewhere, the apostle, while vindicating the claims of the Gentiles to be received into the church on equal terms with the Jews, enforces his argument by the fact that God is no respecter of persons, that his goodness extends to all, and that he has proposed to bestow final salvation on both Jews and Gentiles, to wit, the whole human family. See notes on Rom. xi. 25-32.

11. *We have obtained*, &c. Either the Jews, in contradistinction to the Gentiles, ver. 13, or more probably the first believers, whether Jews or Gentiles; see ver. 12; 1 Tim. iv. 10. ¶ *Predestinated*. See notes on Rom. viii. 28-30. ¶ *Who worketh all things*, &c. Who accomplishes all his purposes; who is not turned aside by the perverseness of sinners nor hindered by any unexpected obstruction. Isa. xli. 10.

after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

---

12. *That we should be to the praise*, &c. "Should be the occasion or the means of celebrating his glory; or that praise should be ascribed to him as the result of our salvation."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Who first trusted in Christ*. Or hoped, as in the margin. See note on ver. 11.

13. *In whom ye also trusted*, &c. The Ephesians, whom he was specially addressing, and generally all who were not among the first believers. See note on ver. 11. ¶ *Gospel of your salvation*. See note on Luke ii. 10. ¶ *Sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise*. There may be a reference here to the occurrence recorded in Acts xix. 1-6. But generally, in the apostolic age, believers enjoyed special influences of the Divine Spirit, testifying that they were children of God. Rom. viii. 15-17.

14. *Which is the earnest of our inheritance*. See note on 2 Cor. i. 22. ¶ *Until the redemption*, &c. See note on Rom. viii. 23.

15, 16. *After I heard of your faith*, &c. Although the gospel was preached at Ephesus by Paul, and many believed, yet, as several years had elapsed before this epistle was written, he may be understood to mean, that he had recently heard that they remained steadfast in the faith, and therefore gave thanks. The general purport of his prayer, ver. 15-23, has been briefly paraphrased thus: "It is the constant subject of my prayers and

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

thankfulness, that you may continue in union with Christ; and that your minds may be enlightened more and more by contemplating the greatness of this dispensation, and the wonderful events, especially the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, whereby God hath united unto himself the whole race of mankind in one vast comprehensive scheme of salvation."—*Gilpin*.

17. *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The Father who "sent the Son" to communicate all these blessings, and thus to become "the Saviour of the world." 1 John iv. 14. ¶ *The Father of glory*. The glorious Father. ¶ *In the knowledge of him*. Or, "for the acknowledgment" of him, as in the margin.

18. *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened*. That is, by the wisdom and revelation of the Divine Spirit, ver. 17. ¶ *The hope of his calling*. "The meaning here is, that it would be an inestimable privilege to be made fully acquainted with the benefits of the Christian hope, and to be permitted to understand fully what Christians have a right to expect in the world of glory."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Riches of the glory, &c.* Or, glorious

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

riches of the promised blessing. See note on Rom. ii. 4.

19. *Exceeding greatness of his power, &c.* As men are dependent on God for salvation from sin, the apostle desired that they should be conscious of his power to bestow the blessing. In like manner, and for a like purpose, our Lord declared that none is able to pluck us from our Father's hand. John x. 29.

20. *When he raised him from the dead*. Thus demonstrating him to be the Son of God. See note on Rom. i. 4. ¶ *At his own right hand*. See note on Acts ii. 34; vii. 55.

21. *Far above all principality, &c.* "The general sense of this verse is, that the Lord Jesus was exalted to the highest conceivable dignity and honor. Compare Phil. ii. 9; Col. ii. 10."—*Barnes*.

22. *And hath put all things under his feet*. See note on 1 Cor. xv. 27. ¶ *Head over all things, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. xi. 3. He is the spiritual head of the whole human family, which is to be gathered together in him, ver. 10, and to become one in him. John xvii. 21.

23. *Which is his body, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. xii. 27.

## CHAPTER II.

**A**ND you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times

past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised *us* up to-

## CHAPTER II.

1. *And you hath he quickened, &c.* Made alive. "The wages of sin is death." See note on Rom. vi. 23. That this death is not endless in its nature, and that it does not necessarily extend beyond the present state of existence, is evident from the fact that believers, such as the apostle here addresses, are made alive, or pass from death unto life, while they yet dwell in the flesh. See note on John v. 24. The same God who raised his Son from the dead, ch. i. 20, had also raised the brethren at Ephesus from their spiritual death, and they might safely believe that the same power would be effectual to raise them to immortal life, after the dissolution of their earthly tabernacle. 2 Cor. v. i. "The words 'hath he quickened,' or made to live, are supplied, but not improperly, by our translators."—*Barnes*. See ver. 5.

2. *The course of this world.* Either the customs of the *age*, as the world probably denotes, or the customs of mankind generally in the present state of existence. The idea is, that the Ephesians had formerly been sinners, like others. ¶ *Prince of the power of the air.* Equivalent to "prince of this world," John xii. 31; and "the god of this world," 2 Cor. iv. 4: see the notes. ¶ *The spirit that now worketh, &c.* This phrase is explanatory of the foregoing: "the prince of the power of the air" being that disobedient, sinful spirit to which all are

subject before they are quickened to new life.

3. *Among whom also we all had our conversation, &c.* Jews, as well as Gentiles, were dead in sin. This idea is amplified and illustrated in the first three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin." Gal. iii. 22. See also Rom. xi. 32. All are in like need of divine grace, and God hath promised to be gracious to all. ¶ *In the lusts of our flesh.* "Fleshly lusts" are represented as warring against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11, and as furnishing the principal incitement to sin, James i. 13-15. See note on Rom. vi. 7. ¶ *By nature the children of wrath, &c.* Subject to punishment for sin. See note on John iii. 36.

4. *His great love wherewith he loved us, &c.* God does not love his children because he has quickened them from their deadness in sin, but he quickens and raises them because he loves them abundantly. See John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9, 10, 19.

5. *Even when we were dead in sins.* Even the sinfulness of men has not separated them from the love of God. Rom. viii. 38, 39. He is so far from hating them, and requiring to be pacified by the blood of his Son, as many have erroneously believed, that the gift of his Son was the fruit of his love which had never been cooled or diminished. See note on Rom. v. 8. ¶ *By grace ye are saved.* See ver. 8.

6. *Hath raised us up together.* "That

gether, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in *his* kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of

yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

11 Wherefore remember, that

is, we are raised from the death of sin to the life of religion, in connection with the resurrection of Jesus, and in virtue of that. So close is the connection between him and his people, that his resurrection made theirs certain. Compare Col. ii. 12."—*Barnes*. ¶ *And made us sit together in heavenly places*, &c. Here, as in ch. i. 3, 20, and ch. iii. 10, the word *places* is supplied by the translators. Some suppose the phrase to indicate heaven; but the better opinion is, that by sitting together in heavenly places, the apostle means simply enjoying spiritual blessings.

7. *Exceeding riches of his grace*, &c. See ver. 4.

8. *For by grace are ye saved*, &c. "By mere favor. It is not by your own merit; it is not because you have any claim. This is a favorite doctrine with Paul, as it is with all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity."—*Barnes*. This idea is fully elaborated in the first three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. The Gentiles, without written law, and the Jews, having "the oracles of God," had equally failed of attaining righteousness, and were equally dependent on the grace of God to grant them justification through faith. See note on Rom. i. 17. ¶ *And that not of yourselves*, &c. Some commentators understand the apostle to refer to faith, as the gift of God. The fact that faith is one of the gracious gifts of God is doubtless true; but Paul seems here to refer to salvation, rather than faith, as "not of yourselves," but as a divine gift. "By the mere favor of God ye Jews and Gentiles are saved through faith; and this salvation

is no work of yours; it is the free gift of God."—*Macknight*.

9. *Not of works*, &c. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." The only hope for the least sinful man is, that he may be "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 20–24. See also note on Rom. xi. 6. It has been supposed, by some, that the apostle speaks here only of that partial salvation from sin, which believers enjoy, through faith, in the present life, and which is indicated in ver. 1, by the quickening of those who had been dead in trespasses and sins. Be it so. Yet it must be remembered that if the less important blessing be the gift of God, to the utter exclusion of works, much more the greater. If men cannot merit partial deliverance from sinfulness by their works, they are surely unable to purchase final and absolute salvation. "Consider it, therefore, always as the gift of God's goodness. Claim nothing on your own merits; but all from the grace of God in Christ."—*Gilpin*.

10. *We are his workmanship*, &c. Created by him, and renewed by him in the spirit of our minds, ch. iv. 23, being quickened into life by him from our deadness in sin, ver. 1. ¶ *Created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, &c. Although good works are not the meritorious cause of salvation, ver. 9, yet they "accompany salvation," Heb. vi. 9, and are the legitimate fruit of that grace which "bringeth salvation." Titus ii. 11, 12.

11. *Wherefore remember*, &c. To excite their gratitude for the blessing

ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who

bestowed, the apostle calls the attention of his brethren to the depth of spiritual degradation from which they had been delivered.

12. *Without Christ, &c.* While they were yet unconverted Gentiles, ver. 11, destitute of the divine oracles, and ignorant of the "covenants of promise," they were of course destitute of faith in Christ and faith in the true God, and of the joy which such faith affords. But though they were in this sense "without Christ," and "without God in the world," God was nevertheless their loving Father, and had sent his Son Jesus Christ to save them from their sins and to bring them to a knowledge of the truth. John iii. 16, 17; Rom. v. 8; 1 Tim. ii. 4.

13. *By the blood of Christ.* By the covenant of grace, of which, in the Eastern phraseology, the blood of Christ was the seal. See note on Matt. xxvi. 28. Or, it may be understood of the doctrine of grace, proclaimed by Christ, which he figuratively styled his *flesh* and his *blood*. See notes on John vi. 54, 63.

14. *He is our peace, &c.* "The peace here referred to is that by which a union in worship and in feeling has been produced between the Jews and the Gentiles."—*Barnes*. ¶ *The middle wall of partition.* The figure is drawn from the partition-wall in the temple, which separated the "court of

hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

the Gentiles" from the space appropriated for the Jews; but the special reference is to the ceremonial law, as is manifest from the language in ver. 15.

15. *In his flesh.* A figurative expression, similar to "the blood of Christ" in ver. 13. ¶ *Enmity.* The cause of alienation or enmity between the Jews and Gentiles. ¶ *The law of commandments, &c.* Namely, the ritual law of Moses, which occasioned the enmity before mentioned. ¶ *One new man, &c.* To unite Jews and Gentiles into one harmonious body, one Christian church.

16. *And that he might reconcile both unto God, &c.* See notes on 2 Cor. v. 18–20. Thus should the two races not only be at peace with each other, but also at peace with God. ¶ *By the cross.* Equivalent to "blood of Christ," ver. 13, and "his flesh," ver. 15. ¶ *Having slain the enmity thereby.* Between Jews and Gentiles, by removing the cause, ver. 15; and between both Jews and Gentiles and their gracious Father. See note on Rom. v. 10.

17. *Preached peace, &c.* "That is, the system of religion which he proclaimed was adapted to produce peace with God. This he preached personally to those who "were nigh," that is, the Jews; to those who were "afar off," the Gentiles, he preached it by his apostles."—*Barnes*.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building

18. *For through him, &c.* "For through him, thus reconciling us to God, we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one spirit of adoption conferred upon us by the Father, and are enabled to come unto him as our Father. Rom. viii. 15."—*Whitby*.

19. *Strangers and foreigners.* "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," ver. 12. ¶ *Fellow-citizens with the saints, &c.* Though Gentiles by birth, ye are united with the believing Jews into one church, one common brotherhood.

20. *And are built, &c.* Some suppose this architectural figure was introduced to gratify the Ephesians, who were proud of their splendid edifices, especially the Temple of Diana; others, that Paul had in his mind the temple at Jerusalem, as the fittest emblem of the Christian church. But this figure is often used by him, when addressing other churches. See note on 1 Cor. iii. 9. ¶ *Apostles and prophets.* The general idea is, that faith in divine revelation lies at the foundation of the Christian church. ¶ *Chief corner stone.* The most important of all. Jesus alone, of all the divine messengers, was "the brightness" of the Father's "glory, and the express image of his person." Heb. i. 3.

21. *In whom all the building, &c.* See note on ver. 20.

22. *Habitation of God, &c.* See note on 2 Cor. vi. 16. Ver. 19-22 have been briefly paraphrased thus: "You are therefore no longer foreigners, but members of the church of Christ, that universal church, founded

fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

### CHAPTER III.

**F**OR this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dis-

upon prophets and apostles, in which Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner stone, and in which God, by his Holy Spirit, now dwells, as he once inhabited the temple of the Jews."—*Gilpin*.

### CHAPTER III.

1. *For this cause I Paul, &c.* Because his brethren had been quickened from death in sin, by the grace of God, and admitted to the full privileges of the gospel, as described in the previous chapter, the apostle here commences an earnest exhortation that they should walk worthy of their vocation. But he suddenly breaks off, and what follows to ch. iv. 1, is a parenthesis. Some have attempted to avoid such an abrupt transition by a different translation, thus: "For this cause I Paul, the servant of Jesus, am in bonds."—*Tyndale*. "For this cause am I Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ."—*Haweis*. But the parenthesis is characteristic of Paul, and is probably the true construction. Besides, he would scarcely say that God's goodness to the Gentiles was the cause of his imprisonment, as represented by the versions of *Tyndale* and *Haweis*. ¶ *The prisoner.* Paul is supposed to have been imprisoned at Rome when he wrote this epistle.

2. *If ye have heard, &c.* The particle rendered *if* "is not here designed to express a doubt whether they had heard of it or not, for he takes it for granted that they had."—*Barnes*. "Seeing ye have heard," &c.—*Macknight*. "Since I well know you have heard,"



pensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward :

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery ; (as I wrote afore in few words ;

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit ;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same

body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel :

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ;

9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid

&c.—*Doddridge.* ¶ *Dispensation of the grace, &c.* By the gracious appointment of God, Paul had been commissioned to preach the gospel, not only to the Ephesians, but to the Gentiles generally; and this appointment he regarded as a favor, notwithstanding it involved so much labor and hardship. See note on 2 Cor. iv. 1. See also 1 Tim. i. 12.

3. *How that by revelation, &c.* See note on Gal. i. 1. ¶ *Mystery.* That which before was unknown. See note on Rom. xi. 25. ¶ *As I wrote afore in few words.* Or, “a little before,” as in the margin. Commentators differ in opinion in regard to the apostle’s meaning here: some understand him to refer to a former epistle, now lost; others, and with apparently better reason, understand him to refer to what he had previously written in this epistle.

4. *Whereby, when ye read, &c.* When they should receive and read this epistle, they would understand Paul’s knowledge concerning the divine plan of justification by faith, and its extent to the Gentiles equally with the Jews.

5. *Which in other ages was not known, &c.* Namely, the “mystery of Christ,” ver. 4. This explains the meaning of the word mystery,—namely, something unknown for a time, and afterwards “revealed.”

6. *That the Gentiles should be fel-*

*low heirs, &c.* This was a mystery, hid from all the posterity of Abraham, until Christ appeared in the flesh. The Jews “stumbled at that stumbling stone,” Rom. ix. 32, imagining that a strict observance of the law was indispensable to justification. But the mystery was revealed, “that God would justify the heathen through faith,” Gal. iii. 8, and save the fullness of the Gentiles,” as well as “all Israel.” Rom. xi. 25, 26.

7. *Whereof I was made a minister, &c.* See note on ver. 2.

8. *Less than the least of all saints.* Paul fully realized the worthlessness of his own works, as the meritorious cause of the blessings which God had bestowed on him. Indeed, he acknowledged himself to be blameworthy before God, on account of his early opposition to Christianity. See note on 1 Cor. xv. 9. Yet his conscience bore him witness, that, after his conversion, he “was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.” See note on 2 Cor. xi. 5. ¶ *Unsearchable riches of Christ.* The full glory of the blessings revealed in the “promise in Christ by the gospel,” ver. 6, whereof Paul “was made a minister,” ver. 7, surpasses the most vivid conceptions of the human mind. See note on 1 Cor. ii. 9.

9. *The fellowship of the mystery, &c.* “Archbishop Whately (*Errors of Romanism*, ch. ii., § 1) renders it ‘the

in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have bold-

ness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

common participation of the mystery; that is, of truths formerly unknown, and which could not be known by man's unaided powers, but which were now laid open by the gracious dispensation of Divine Providence; no longer concealed, or confined to a few, but to be partaken of by all."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Who created all things by Jesus Christ*. "Who frames and manages this whole new creation by Jesus Christ. St. Paul speaks of the work of redemption under the name of creation. So 2 Cor. v. 17, and Gal. vi. 15."—*Locke*. "Διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (by Jesus Christ) is not in the best Mss."—*Conybeare*. The phrase is rejected by Griesbach, and the best critics.

10. *Principalities and powers*. Most commentators suppose that different orders of angels are here intended. I prefer the interpretation by Locke and others, that the phrase denotes ecclesiastical rulers. ¶ *Manifold wisdom*, &c. See note on 1 Cor. ii. 7. "That which calls forth the expressions of rapturous admiration here, and in the similar passage, Rom. xi. 33, is the divine plan of including all mankind in a universal redemption."—*Conybeare*.

11. *Eternal purpose*, &c. See note on ch. i. 9. "The fair meaning of the passage here is, that God had formed a plan which was eternal in reference to the salvation of men; that that plan had reference to the Lord Jesus, and that it was now executed by the gospel. It is impossible to get away from the idea that God has a plan. It is too often affirmed in the Scriptures, and is too consonant with our reason, to be

ness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

disputed. It is as undesirable as it is impossible to escape from that idea. Who could respect or honor an intelligent being that had no plan, no purpose, no intention, and that did all things by caprice and hap-hazard? If God has any plan, it must be eternal. He has no new schemes; he has no intentions which he did not always have."—*Barnes*. I only add, that it is utterly inconceivable that this eternal plan should involve the endless misery of men who were not yet created, and who had not done good or evil. Such a design or plan is wholly inconsistent with the character of that God whose essential characteristic is Love. 1 John iv. 16.

12. *In whom we have boldness*, &c. As disciples of Jesus, and through faith in his assurance that God is our Father, more kind and gracious than earthly parents, Matt. vii. 11, we may approach the mercy-seat without fear, believing that the Father will receive us kindly, and bestow the blessings which we need.

13. *Wherefore I desire that ye faint not*, &c. Paul was then a "prisoner" at Rome, ver. 1; but he would not have his brethren disheartened on account of his persecutions. On the contrary, he would have their faith confirmed by his own fortitude in the midst of tribulations. See ver. 16.

14. *For this cause*. Namely, that ye may not faint, but be encouraged. ¶ *I bow my knees*. I offer prayer.

15. *Of whom the whole family*, &c. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men." Acts xvii. 26. ¶ *In heaven and earth*. Some commentators understand angels and men; others,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

the spirits of just men made perfect in the future life and those who remain on earth; others, the Jews and the Gentiles. In either case, the pervading idea is, universality; God is the universal Father of intelligent beings. See note on ch. i. 10.

16. *To be strengthened with might, &c.* "To be powerfully strengthened. That is, to give you abundant strength to bear trials, to perform your duties, to glorify his name."—*Barnes*.

17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.* See note on John xiv. 23. ¶ *Rooted and grounded.* Firmly established.

18. *May be able to comprehend, &c.* In the next verse the apostle declares that the "love of Christ—passeth knowledge," though he here prays that his brethren may comprehend it. In like manner, although "by searching," no man can "find out the Almighty unto perfection," yet to every one comes the exhortation, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." Job xi. 7; xxii. 21. We may learn much, though perfect knowledge be beyond our present capacity. ¶ *The breadth, and length, and depth, and height.* The extent, in all directions. The apostle would express the greatness of the love of Christ.

19. *The love of Christ.* His love for us; see note on Rom. viii. 35. ¶ *Which passeth knowledge.* Which cannot be perfectly understood; see note on ver. 18. ¶ *Filled with all the fulness of God.*

"That you may have abundantly in you whatsoever things are requisite to make you perfect with God; that you

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

may be replenished with all spiritual graces."—*Assemb. Annot.*

20. *Now unto him that is able, &c.* See note on Rom. xvi. 25. ¶ *Exceeding abundantly.* See note on 2 Cor. iv. 17. ¶ *Above all that we ask or think.* We cannot now fully comprehend the vastness or riches of the blessings which divine grace will bestow. See note on 1 Cor. ii. 9.

21. *Unto him be glory, &c.* "This sublime doxology is to be considered, not only as a strong expression of the apostle's admiration of God's goodness to men, but also as a means of strengthening the faith of the Ephesians. For lest the great blessing which the apostle had taught them to expect might seem too much for sinful creatures to receive, and more than God would bestow on them, he ends the doctrinal part of his epistle, in which these blessings are described, with a doxology to God, as both able and willing to bestow on believers blessings far more and greater than they are able to ask or even to conceive."—*Macknight*. ¶ *Throughout all ages, world without end.* "To all the generations of the age of the ages. The cumulative expression is somewhat peculiar. It is not improbable, as Grotius suggests, that the two formulæ expressive of endless continuity are here blended together."—*Ellicott*. "Literally, 'unto all generations of the age of ages,' or 'unto all the generations of the eternity of eternities, or the eternity of ages.' It is a language of a heart full of the love of God, and desiring that he might be praised without ceasing forever and ever."—*Barnes*.

## CHAPTER IV.

**I** THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

## CHAPTER IV.

"St. Paul having concluded the special part of his epistle with the foregoing chapter, he comes in this, as his manner is, to practical exhortations. He begins with unity, love, and concord, which he presses upon them, upon a consideration that he makes use of in more of his epistles than one, that is, their being all members of one and the same body, whereof Christ is the head."—*Locke*.

1. *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, &c.* Here the subject is resumed which was broken off at the commencement of the previous chapter. See note on ch. iii. 1. In view of the abundant grace which God had manifested to the Gentiles, the apostle exhorts the Ephesians, who had been made partakers of that grace, to "walk as children of light," or to conduct as Christians. Ch. v. 8. ¶ *Walk worthy of the vocation, &c.* That your conduct be "agreeable, suitable, and congruous, to those happy circumstances into which the grace of God hath brought you, whom he hath converted from heathenism to Christianity."—*Henry*.

2. *With all lowliness and meekness.* See notes on Acts xx. 19; Rom. xii. 3. ¶ *Long suffering.* Patient endurance of trials and afflictions. ¶ *Forbearing one another in love.* See note on Rom. xv. 1.

3. *Unity of the Spirit.* See note on Rom. xii. 16. As the church of Ephesus embraced both Jews and Gentiles, this exhortation was pecu-

4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

5 *One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

6 *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

7 *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

8 *Wherefore he saith, When*

liarily important, lest national jealousies should be cherished as a "root of bitterness." ¶ *In the bond of peace.* See note on Rom. xii. 18.

4. *There is one body and one Spirit, &c.* The church is often represented as the body, of which Christ is the head; and the same figure is sometimes used as descriptive of the whole human family, in which sense it is said "the head of every man is Christ." 1 Cor. xi. 3. See notes on Rom. xii. 4, 5, where the same figure occurs.

5. *One Lord.* See note on 1 Cor. viii. 6. ¶ *One faith.* A belief in the same gospel, the same message of grace from the universal Father to his children. ¶ *One baptism.* This refers to the fact; not to the mode. Whether baptism were administered in one form or another, all had been baptized as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ; and this was a bond of union.

6. *One God and Father of all, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. viii. 6. This God is supreme, and pervades all the works of his hands.

7. *But unto every one of us is given grace, &c.* See notes on Rom. xii. 3, 6. From what follows in ver. 11, it seems that the apostle had special reference to spiritual gifts, as in Rom. xii. 6-8, and 1 Cor. xii. 7-11. "But these gifts, and capacities, and qualifications for the serving of Christ in the church, are not in the same manner and measure given to all, but severally, and in diverse degrees, such as Christ in his several distribution of gifts is pleased to dispense."—*Hammond*.

8. *Wherefore he saith, &c.* "The

he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the

saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

quotation is from Ps. lxxviii. 18, but slightly altered, so as to correspond neither with the Hebrew nor with the Septuagint. Our two authorized versions of the Psalms have here departed from the original, in order to follow the present passage; probably on the supposition that St. Paul quoted some older reading."—*Conybeare*. Of the various interpretations which have been given of this verse, I prefer that which supposes the apostle to have adopted this language from the Old Testament, as well fitted to express his ideas concerning the bestowment of gifts by Christ upon his disciples, ver. 7, 11; without intending to declare that it was originally prophetic of this event.

9. *Lower parts of the earth*. "To the lowest state of humiliation. This seems to be the fair meaning of the words. Heaven stands opposed to earth. One is above, the other is beneath. From the one Christ descended to the other, and he came not only to the earth, but he stooped to the most humble condition of humanity here. See Phil. ii. 6-8."—*Barnes*. See note on John iii. 13.

10. *That he might fill all things*. "That he might fill all things with his influence, and direct and overrule all by his wisdom and power."—*Dodridge*.

11. *And he gave some, apostles, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. xii. 28. These are

some of the gifts mentioned in ver. 8. ¶ *Evangelists*. Literally, messengers of good tidings. The title is peculiarly appropriate to the preachers of the gospel of grace and salvation, and peculiarly inappropriate to those who proclaim endless wrath and condemnation.

12. *For the perfecting of the saints*. For their growth in grace, 2 Pet. iii. 18; for their improvement in all the Christian virtues. Absolute perfection is not to be expected; but an approximation to that condition is the legitimate fruit of Christian culture. ¶ *For the work of the ministry*. The several classes enumerated in ver. 11 were engaged in the gospel ministry; and, in the apostolic age, such diversified labor was necessary. ¶ *For the edifying, &c.* See note on Rom. xiv. 19. ¶ *Body of Christ*. The church; all believers. See note on Rom. xii. 4, 5.

13. *Till we all come, &c.* Until we become perfect men, or attain mature manhood in faith, in contradistinction to the present state of childhood mentioned in ver. 14. ¶ *Stature of the fulness of Christ*. Namely, become like him, in spirit, and word, and deed, so far as mere man may imitate him who was without sin and blameless.

14. *That we henceforth be no more children, &c.* "In some respects Christians are to be like children, they

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even Christ*:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

are to be docile, gentle, mild, and free from ambition, pride, and haughtiness. But children have other characteristics besides simplicity and docility. They are often changeable, Matt. xi. 17; they are credulous, and are influenced easily by others and led astray. In these respects, Paul exhorts the Ephesians to be no longer children, but urges them to put on the characteristics of manhood; and especially to put on the *firmness* in religious opinion which became maturity of life." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Carried about with every wind of doctrine*. Like the weather-vane, which obeys the slightest influence of the wind, pointing now in one direction, and anon in another, constant in nothing long. ¶ *Sleight of men*, &c. Our Lord cautioned his disciples that many deceivers were in the world, who, "if it were possible," would "deceive the very elect." Matt. xxiv. 24. It has been so in all ages, and it is so now. By "cunning craftiness," all possible inducements are offered to cause the weak-minded to turn from the divine testimony to human fables. Against the wiles of such adversaries we cannot guard too closely.

15. *Speaking the truth in love*. Or, *being sincere*, as in the margin; the opposite of that "cunning craftiness whereby others lie in wait to deceive," ver. 14. ¶ *May grow up into him*, &c. Into Christ. See notes on Rom. xii. 4, 5.

16. *From whom the whole body*, &c. "The apostle's meaning is, that as the human body is formed by the union of all the members to each other under the head, and by the fitness of each

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over un-

member for its own office and place in the body, so the church is formed by the union of its members under Christ the head. Further, as the human body increases till it arrives at maturity, by the energy of every part in performing its proper function, and by the sympathy of every part with the whole; so the body or church of Christ grows to maturity, by the proper exercise of the gifts and graces of individuals for the benefit of the whole." — *Macknight*.

17. *Walk not as other Gentiles walk*. Conduct not like other Gentiles. The Ephesian church probably consisted chiefly of Gentiles; and the apostle exhorts his brethren to abandon their former habits of life, and to conduct according to the spirit and precepts of Christ. ¶ *In the vanity of their mind*. What the apostle means by such vanity is specified in the succeeding verses.

18. *Having the understanding darkened*, &c. "That long course of sin having blinded their understandings, so that they see not that which by the light of nature they are enabled to see, and by that gross ignorance and obduration of heart, run into all impiety, are far removed from that life which God and nature require of them." — *Hammond*. The moral condition of the Gentiles, while in darkness and alienation, is vividly described in Romans, chap. i.

19. *Past feeling*. Dead in sin. Ch. ii. 1. "Insensible of the vileness of their actions." — *Whitby*. ¶ *Have given themselves over*, &c. See Rom. i. 24–32.

to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

---

20. *But ye have not so learned Christ.* Ye have learned a different lesson from Christ.

21. *If so be, &c.* If you have listened attentively, and understandingly to him, or to his authorized messengers, and have laid hold by faith upon the truth taught by him.

22. *The former conversation.* Former conduct. See note on 2 Cor. i. 12. ¶ *The old man.* See note on Rom. vi. 6. ¶ *Deceitful lusts.* The word lusts is here applied to sinful passions generally. See note on Rom. vii. 7.

23. *And be renewed, &c.* See note on Rom. xii. 2.

24. *And that ye put on the new man.* Equivalent to being renewed, ver. 23; or becoming a "new creature." See note on 2 Cor. v. 17. ¶ *Which after God is created, &c.* "*Which is created God-like.*" — *Haweis.* "*Which after a godly wise is shapen.*" — *Tyndale.* "*Created after God's likeness.*" — *Conybeare.*

25. *Wherefore putting away lying, &c.* Some have understood this to imply that the Ephesians were still addicted to lying, notwithstanding their conversion to Christianity. This, however, seems unnecessary. The phrase may be fairly interpreted as an exhortation to avoid lying, to refrain from lying; or, as in ver. 28, to mean, "let him who lied lie no more, but let him speak truth to his neighbor." ¶ *For we are members one of another.* We are one body, of which Christ is

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

---

the head. See note on Rom. xii. 5. The harmony of the body is disturbed by falsehood.

26. *Be ye angry and sin not.* Anger is not necessarily sinful, see note on Mark iii. 5; but it becomes so when cherished and accompanied by a desire to injure others. "Anger is excited when a horse kicks us; when a serpent hisses; when we dash our foot against a stone; and so when a man raises his hand to strike us. The object or final cause of implanting this passion in the mind of man is to rouse him to an immediate defence of himself when suddenly attacked, and before his reason would have time to suggest the proper means of defence. It prompts at once to self-protection; and when that is done, its proper office ceases; if persevered in, it becomes sinful malignity, or revenge, always wrong." — *Barnes.* ¶ *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.* A proverbial phrase, vividly expressing the duty of curbing and restraining our angry passions. We are not to "nurse our wrath, to keep it warm;" we should rather strive to overcome it, and to regain our composure of mind, and goodwill to others.

27. *Neither give place to the devil.* "Give no place unto the backbiter." — *Tyndale.* "*Διὰβολος* signifies any false accuser. Thus 1 Tim. iii. 11. In this sense the Syriac translator took the word in the verse under consideration, — so likewise did Erasmus. According to their translation, the apostle's meaning is, give no occasion

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

to infidels to speak evil of the holy religion which ye profess."—*Mac-knight*.

28. *Let him labor, &c.* Theft was a common vice among the Gentiles. It is not easy to forsake evil habits at once and entirely. Hence the apostle cautions his Gentile brethren to beware; and, as a safeguard against temptation, he exhorts them to be diligent in some honest vocation. Thus would they provide for their own necessities, and have something wherewith to assist their necessitous brethren.

29. *Let no corrupt communication, &c.* "Loose discourse."—*Haweis*. "Filthy words."—*Conybeare*. "Corrupt, worthless speech."—*Ellicott*. "It appears to mean any word or thing obscene, anything that injures virtue, countenances vice, or scoffs at religion. In the parallel place, Col. iv. 6, the apostle exhorts that our speech may be seasoned with salt, to preserve it from putrefaction."—*Clarke*. ¶ *Use of edifying*. Or, "to edify profitably," as in the margin. See note on Rom. xiv. 19.

30. *And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, &c.* For the meaning of "Holy Spirit of God," see notes on John xiv. 26; Rom. viii. 14, 16. "We are not to suppose that the Holy Spirit literally endures grief, or pain, at the conduct of men. The language is such as is fitted to describe what men endure, and is applied to him to

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

## CHAPTER V.

**B**E ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

denote that kind of conduct which is fitted to cause grief; and the meaning here is, do not pursue such a course as is fitted, in its own nature, to pain the benevolent heart of a holy being."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Redemption*. See note on Rom. viii. 23.

31. *Let all bitterness, &c.* Put away or banish from your hearts every passion inconsistent with that love which you are bound to cherish towards all men. See notes on Matt. v. 43-48.

32. *And be ye kind, &c.* "Be courteous and obliging to each other in your daily deportment, and tenderly compassionate towards those that are in any affliction and distress; freely forgiving one another whatever imagined or real injury may be in question, even as God in Christ, and for his sake, hath freely forgiven you such inexcusable and heinous injuries and affronts as are infinitely greater than any which it is possible for you to receive from your fellow-creatures."—*Doddridge*. ¶ *Forgiving one another, &c.* See notes on Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15.

## CHAPTER V.

1. *Be ye therefore followers, &c.* Imitate God, by cherishing love and doing good to your brethren. See Matt. v. 43-48. The division between chapters here is wholly arbitrary. The reference is to the previous exhortations to a spirit of kindness



2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean per-

son, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometime darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light;

and forgiveness, as is indicated by the word *therefore*.

2. *Hath given himself for us, &c.* See notes on Matt. xxvi. 28; John xv. 13; Rom. v. 8. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave the most convincing proof of his love, by laboring and enduring persecution through life, and by sealing his ministry with his own blood. He freely offered his life as a sacrifice in the cause of divine benevolence. In such devotion manifested by the Son, the Father was well pleased, as with a "sweet-smelling savor." For some general remarks on the cause and the effects of Christ's ministry and death, see notes on Rom. iii. 24.

3. *But fornication, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. vi. 18. The vices here mentioned are so utterly inconsistent with the Christian spirit and character, that Paul would have them utterly banished. "This cannot mean that it is wrong to mention these vices, for the purpose of rebuking them, or cautioning those in danger of committing them, for Paul himself in this manner mentions them here, and frequently elsewhere; but that they should not exist among them." — *Barnes*.

4. *Foolish talking and jesting.* From the connection in which these words are found, it is evident that the apostle does not refer to that free and easy conversation in which men indulge as a relaxation from graver thought and speech, or to that play of wit which excites harmless mirth. He must

rather be understood to mean filthy conversation and obscene jests, analogous to the vices mentioned in ver. 3 and 5. "There is, no doubt, an innocent and inoffensive jesting, which we cannot suppose the apostle does here forbid. Some understand him of such scurrilous and abusive reflections as tend to expose others, and to make them ridiculous. This is bad enough; but the context seems to restrain it to such pleasantry of discourse as is filthy and obscene." — *Henry*. ¶ *Not convenient.* Not fit and proper. This use of the word has become obsolete.

5. *For this ye know, &c.* None of the class here described could inherit the heavenly kingdom, until cleansed from such moral defilement. See notes on a similar declaration, 1 Cor. vi. 9–11.

6. *Let no man deceive you, &c.* The heathen philosophers taught a different doctrine; and many of the religious rites and ceremonies encouraged the practice of the vices here condemned. The apostle warns his brethren to beware of such false teachers. ¶ *Cometh the wrath of God, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 18.

7. *Partakers with them.* In their guilt and in their consequent misery.

8. *For ye were sometime darkness.* Ye were formerly immersed in the darkness before described, estranged from God, and defiled by moral impurity. Let the time past suffice to have walked in lasciviousness and

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to

speaking of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reformed are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

abominable idolatries, 1 Pet. iv. 3, and be no longer partakers with them.

¶ *Now are ye light.* Ye have been enlightened by divine grace, and lifted from the horrible pit of iniquity. Your former condition was awful, but not hopeless. Your present condition is glorious, but it involves grave responsibilities. ¶ *Walk as children of light.* Conduct like Christians. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16. Thus may you encourage others to break off their sins, to abandon their evil courses, to embrace the gospel of Christ and obey its precepts, and thus become fit to receive the inheritance from which their present iniquities exclude them. See note on 1 Cor. vi. 9-11.

9. *The fruit of the Spirit.* See note on Gal. v. 22, 23.

10. *Proving what is acceptable, &c.* Some construe these words with ver. 8: "Walk as children of light, thus showing what is acceptable to the Lord."—*Barnes*. Others, with ver. 11: "Examine well what is acceptable to the Lord, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."—*Conybeare*. Either construction gives a good sense.

11. *And have no fellowship, &c.* "Do not connive at them or pass them over unnoticed, but take aggressive measures against them; try and raise the Gentiles to your own Christian standard."—*Ellicott*. ¶ *Unfruitful.* Unprofitable; apparently used in contrast with *fruit* in ver. 9.

12. *For it is a shame, &c.* The character of the vices, practised in se-

cret by the Gentiles, is more plainly indicated in Rom. i. 24-32.

13. *But all things that are reformed, &c.* Or, *discovered*, as in the margin. "All these things when exposed."—*Conybeare*. "But Christianity is a means to discover and display these abominable cheats and villanies, as light is the direct means to discover what darkness hath hid, and to make them renounce and forsake it, when they see it is seen and abhorred by men."—*Hammond*.

14. *Wherefore he saith, &c.* Many commentators suppose the apostle to refer to Isa. lx. 1; but others express a different opinion. "There is no verse exactly corresponding with this in the Old Testament. But Isa. lx. 1 is perhaps referred to. We must remember, however, that there is no proof that St. Paul intends (either here or 1 Cor. ii. 9), to quote the Old Testament. Some have supposed that he is quoting a Christian hymn; others, a saying of our Lord, as at Acts xx. 35."—*Conybeare*. "The apostle doth not here quote any saying recorded in the Jewish Scriptures; but, by a rhetorical figure, he introduces the gospel as addressing an exhortation to the Gentiles, to awake out of the lethargy of sin."—*MacKnight*. "I see no evidence that Paul meant to make a quotation at all. Why may we not suppose that he speaks as an inspired man, and that he means to say, simply, that God *now* gives this command, or that God *now* speaks in this way? The sense would then be, Be separate from sinners. Come out from among the heathen. Do not mingle with their abominations; do

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

not name them. You are the children of light; and God says to you, awake from false security, rouse from the death of sin, and Christ shall enlighten you." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Arise from the dead*. See note on ch. ii. 1.

15. *See then that ye walk circumspectly, &c.* Carefully avoiding the dangers which beset them on every side. See Prov. iv. 25–27. ¶ *Not as fools, but as wise*. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." Prov. xii. 15. The fool is heedless of danger; but the wise seek, both to discover and to shun it.

16. *Redeeming the time*. Improving the time present and future for useful purposes. The past is irrevocable. We should make a wise use of what remains. "Forestalling opportunity." — *Conybeare*. "Buying up for yourselves (making your own) the opportunity, the fitting season." — *Ellicott*. ¶ *Because the days are evil*. Because Christians were surrounded, in those days, by manifold dangers, arising from persecution, temptation, and evil example, it behooved them to seize every opportunity for moral improvement and growth in grace.

17. *Be ye not unwise, &c.* See note on ver. 15.

18, 19. *Be not drunk, &c.* "Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the heathen and the Christian practice; e. g., when you meet, let your enjoyment consist not

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the

in fulness of wine, but fulness of the spirit; let your songs be, not the drinking-songs of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns, and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart; while you sing them to the praise, not of Bacchus or Venus, but of the Lord Jesus Christ." — *Conybeare*.

20. *Giving thanks always, &c.* Recognizing God as the Father, from whom cometh "every good gift and every perfect gift," James i. 17, the recipients of his bounty should thank him constantly. There seems to be a connection between this and the preceding verse, as if gratitude and thankfulness should be offered "in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs." Some understand "all things" to indicate "all persons." If this be the true interpretation, then the idea is similar to that expressed in 1 Tim. ii. 1.

21. *Submitting yourselves, &c.* "Order is Heaven's first law;" and that it may exist, there must be proper subordination in civil society. This is the duty enforced and illustrated, in various particulars, in what follows.

22–24. *Wives, submit yourselves, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. xi. 3–9. It has been well observed, that, "While Christianity designed to elevate the character of the wife, and to make her a fit companion of an intelligent and pious husband, it did not intend to destroy all subordination and authority." — *Barnes*.

wives *be* to their own husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies.

---

25-27. *Husbands, love your wives, &c.* "After this exhortation to wives, Paul subjoins one to husbands (comp. Col. iii. 19), on their side, not to abuse their power, but to love their wives, and that so as Christ loves the church, i. e., in self-devoting, self-sacrificing love, which had for its object the sanctification of the church. This self-sacrificing, sanctifying love, Paul requires of husbands also in marriage. Christ wishes to present the church for himself, i. e., for his joy and glory, in splendor and without spot. In portraying the spotless beauty, Paul plainly has in view the image of the bride,—as Christ purifies and cleanses the church, so likewise a faithful husband wishes to deliver his wife from every moral stain."—*Olshausen*.

28-30. *So ought men to love their wives, &c.* There is an allusion here to the formation of the woman from man. Gen. ii. 20-25. The idea is, that the true interests of the husband and wife are identical; hence he promotes his own happiness by making her happy. Christ is the head of the church, here styled his body, and in a more extensive sense, of all men, see note on Rom. xii. 5; and as such he loves all the members of his body and cherishes them; thus also should husbands love their wives and cherish them.

31. *For this cause, &c.* This is

He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless, let every

---

quoted from Gen. ii. 24, where the original institution of marriage is recorded. See note on Matt. xix. 5.

32. *This is a great mystery.* See note on Rom. xi. 25. ¶ *But I speak concerning Christ and the church.* "The *ἐγὼ* is emphatic: I, while I quote these words out of the Scriptures, use them in a higher sense."—*Conybeare*. "This, it seems to me, is an explicit disclaimer of any intention to be understood as affirming that the marriage contract was designed to be a type of the union of the Redeemer and his people. The apostle says expressly that his remarks do not refer to marriage at all when he speaks of the mystery. They refer solely to the union of the Redeemer and his people. Marriage is an important, a holy, a noble, a pure institution, altogether worthy of God; but it does not thence follow that marriage was designed to be a type of the union between Christ and the church, and it is certain that the apostle Paul meant to teach no such thing."—*Barnes*.

33. *Nevertheless, &c.* The apostle resumes the subject of the relative duties of husbands and wives, from which, as was his wont, he had turned aside to speak of Christ's great love to his body, the universal church. What he says here is substantially an emphatic repetition of ver. 22-28.

one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that, she reverence *her* husband.

## CHAPTER VI.

**C**HILDREN, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

## CHAPTER VI.

1. *Children, obey your parents, &c.* The necessity of order and subordination is further urged in regard to parents and children, and masters and servants. The duty of children to obey their parents, who are their natural protectors, cannot be made more plain by argument. ¶ *In the Lord.* That is, so far as the commands of the parents are consistent with the divine law. No parent has a right to command his child to commit sin, or to disobey God, or to violate the established laws of the country in which he resides. With such limitation, children are bound to obey their parents.

2. *Honor thy father and mother.* See note on Matt. xv. 4. ¶ *First commandment with promise.* "With a promise annexed to it. The promise was, that their days should be long in the land which the Lord their God would give them. It is not to be supposed that the observance of the four first commandments would not be attended with a blessing, but no particular blessing is promised. But the promise of the fifth commandment is a *special* promise. It does not relate to obedience to God in general, but it is a particular assurance that they who honor their parents shall have a particular blessing as the result of that obedience."—*Barnes.*

3. *That it may be well with thee, &c.* The whole "commandment with promise," Deut. v. 16, reads thus:

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eyeservice, as

"Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Length of days was one of the blessings attached to obedience, under the Jewish law; and in all ages, there can be no doubt that virtue and sobriety have a natural tendency to prolong human life. See note on ver. 2.

4. *And ye fathers, provoke not, &c.* All duties are reciprocal. If the child is bound to love the parent, the parent is bound to exhibit an affectionate character worthy of love. 1 John iv. 19. If the child is bound to obey the parent, ver. 1, the parent is equally bound to lay no unnecessary, unreasonable burden on the child, which might provoke him to wrath, and excite a spirit of disobedience and rebellion. ¶ *In the nurture, &c.* Under the influence of the divine commandments.

5. *Servants, be obedient, &c.* Very probably the persons here addressed were held in bondage, though the word δοῦλοι indicates not only slaves, but those who owe service by virtue of a voluntary contract. See notes on Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. vii. 21.

6. *Not with eyeservice, &c.* Not merely while the master's eye is fixed on you, as if your only object was to please him by apparent diligence; but rather yielding faithful service, like a true Christian. The "servant of Christ" will perform his duty cheerfully, whether watched or not. See note on 1 Cor. vii. 22.

men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven;

7. *With good will, &c.* "With uprightness and cheerfulness, a voluntary obedience, which may approve itself to Christ, and not a forced one which arises from fear of man."—*Hammond*.

8. *Knowing that whatsoever good thing, &c.* A just recompense of reward will be rendered to all faithful endeavors, without regard to social position. See notes on Rom. ii. 6, 7.

9. *And ye masters, &c.* "And the masters must use their servants, as fathers were appointed to use their children, ver. 4, not wrathfully and imperiously, but calmly and gently, either as knowing that they themselves have a Master to obey, who commands them to do thus; or knowing that you and they are but fellow-servants in respect of Christ, and, indeed, that if masters do not their duty they shall be as punishable before God as any others of the most inferior degree, God favoring or sparing none upon so slight considerations as these, of their being greater men in this world than others."—*Hammond*.

10. *Be strong in the Lord, &c.* The Ephesians were in the midst of dangers; on the one hand, their Gentile brethren would gladly turn them again to idolatry, and for this purpose were ready, not only to flatter and tempt, but also to persecute them; on the other, the Jews and Judaizing Christians were zealous to bring them under bondage to the ritual law, and

neither is there respect of persons with him.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

for this purpose excited persecution against them. Besides these outward foes, their inward lusts and passions were perpetually warring against their souls, and tempting them to disobey the divine law. They needed divine help to enable them to resist successfully. The apostle had hinted their danger; he now exhorts them to trust in the Lord for strength and succor.

11. *The whole armor of God.* See note on 2 Cor. vi. 7. The figure is military, and is elaborated in the succeeding verses. ¶ *The wiles of the devil.* The cunning devices of the adversary. See notes on ch. iv. 27; Matt. iv. 1. "The devices of the accuser."—*Wakefield*. The character of the adversary, here styled διάβολος *the devil*, is indicated in ver. 12, somewhat in detail.

12. *For we wrestle, &c.* "For we not only have to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the authority, against the powers, against the rulers, of this dark age; against the wickedness of spiritual men, in a heavenly dispensation, — namely, against Jewish governors, who have a dispensation of religion from heaven, as well as against heathen magistrates, under the darkness of superstition and idolatry."—*Wakefield*. ¶ *Flesh and blood.* This expression may indicate the fleshly lusts and passions; but more probably the reference is to mankind in general, in contradistinction to those who exercised political or ecclesiastical author-

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with

the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

ity. ¶ *Principalities*. See note on Jude 6. The word *ἀρχή*, in its various forms, occurs fifty-eight times in the New Testament. It is translated *beginning* forty times; *first*, four times; *corners*, twice, indicating prominent parts, Acts x. 11; xi. 5; *power*, once, Luke xx. 20; *rule*, once, 1 Cor. xv. 24; *principles*, once, Heb. vi. 1; *magistrates*, once, Luke xii. 11; and *principalities*, eight times, Rom. viii. 38; Eph. i. 21; iii. 10; vi. 12; Col. i. 16; ii. 10, 15; Tit. iii. 1. It nowhere else apparently refers to an order of beings in the invisible world, benevolent or malignant; why need it be so understood here? In many places it manifestly does indicate earthly rulers, either political or ecclesiastical; and such, in my judgment, is its meaning here. ¶ *Powers*. The word *ἐξουσία* occurs nearly a hundred times in the New Testament, and is almost uniformly translated *authority*, or *power*. In the very few cases where it is figuratively used to denote individuals, the reference is plainly to earthly rulers. Thus we read, "when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto *magistrates and powers*," Luke xii. 11; but the parallel passage expresses the same idea thus: "Ye shall be brought before *governors and kings*." Matt. x. 18. See also Titus iii. 1. Such is evidently its meaning in this place. ¶ *Rulers of the darkness*, &c. Heathen rulers, in contradistinction to ecclesiastical rulers, styled *spiritual wickedness in high places*. Tyndale translates the whole verse thus: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against rule, against power, and against worldly rulers of the darkness of this world,

against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things." And Simpson paraphrases thus: "Not against men only, but against supreme governors and powerful magistrates, against the rulers of this world benighted with error and superstition, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things."

13. *Wherefore*, &c. See note on ver. 11.

14-17. The military figure introduced in ver. 11 is here elaborated. It may be difficult to point out any particular reason why one of the Christian virtues should be styled a girdle, another a breastplate, and so of the rest. "Perhaps in themselves there may have been no special reason for this arrangement, but the object may have been merely to specify the different parts of the armor of a soldier, and to compare them with the weapons which Christians were to use, though the comparison should be made somewhat at random." — *Barnes*. The following paraphrase is plain and homely, but exhibits a substantially true idea of the apostle's meaning: "Let your military preparations against these assaults be these: First, truth, the doctrine of the gospel in opposition to heathen errors and heretical insinuations, and let that be your military girdle that keeps on the other armor; secondly, righteousness, sincere, faithful obedience to Christ, to guard the whole man from assaults of sin, as the breastplate guards him. Isa. lix. 17. Thirdly, the practice of Christian charity and peaceableness, to supply the place of shoes, that ye may go on expeditely in the Christian course, and not fall or miscarry by the way, through the traps

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints ;

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds ; that therein

I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things :

22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

that heretics and schismatics lay to wound and gall you, and hinder your progress. Fourthly, faith, or the believing both the promises of Christ to all reformed penitents and the threats to all impenitent, sensual persons ; which will keep temptations from entering, and be able to allay the pleasures of those sensual baits proposed to you either by Satan or any other tempter, which, like poisoned darts, will wound you to death, if the consideration of your duty, the promises and terrors of Christ, received by your faith, do not help to quench them. Fifthly, the hope of salvation, which may serve as an helmet, Isa. lix. 17, to bear off any blow (at least secure you from any hurt of it) that can light upon you. And, sixthly, the Spirit, that is, the word of God, which may serve as a sword to assault the assailants and destroy them, to slay all that is temptation in them, by proposing to the Christian much stronger motives to obedience than the world can afford to the contrary." — *Hammond*.

18. *Praying always, &c.* Christians should cherish a constant spirit of prayer. See note on Rom. i. 9. They will thus be more sensible whence their help cometh, and will more confidently expect it. ¶ *In the Spirit.* See note on Rom. viii. 26. ¶ *Supplication for all saints.* Our Lord prayed for his disciples first, and then for the whole race of man. John ch. xvii.; and his apostle exhorts that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." 1 Tim. ii. 1.

19. *And for me, &c.* See note on 2 Cor. i. 11. ¶ *Open my mouth boldly.* Paul was not accustomed to withhold his testimony ; on the contrary he declared all the counsel of God, without fear ; and this he had done specially at Ephesus. See Acts xx. 17–27. He was now deprived of his liberty, and his life was in peril ; yet he determined to be faithful to the end, and he sought encouragement to faithfulness through the prayers of his brethren.

20. *An ambassador in bonds.* There is something peculiarly interesting in the apostle's language here. The person of an ambassador was regarded as sacred, and exempt from arrest. But Paul, an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ, was confined at Rome as a state prisoner, ch. iii. 1. He had freedom of speech, Acts xxviii. 30, 31, and desired the sympathy and prayers of his brethren that he might bear open testimony to the truth.

21. "We learn from Acts xx. 4, that Tychicus was of Asia, and that he was a useful companion of St. Paul. The same person, and with the same character and commendation, is mentioned in Col. iv. 7 ; also in Tit. iii. 12, and 2 Tim. iv. 12 ; from all places it is evident that he was a person in whom the apostle had the highest confidence, and that he was a very eminent minister of Christ." — *Clarke*.

22. *Whom I have sent, &c.* It is supposed that he was the bearer of this epistle, and commissioned to impart all necessary information concerning the apostle's welfare, during his imprisonment.



23 Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

23. *Peace be to the brethren, &c.* See note on Rom. xv. 33.

24. *Grace be with all them, &c.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20. ¶ *In sincerity.* Or, *in incorruption*, as in the margin.

The subscriptions to the several

24 Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome unto the Ephesians by Tychicus.

epistles are admitted to be destitute of apostolic authority. From what is said in ch. vi. 21, 22, however, it seems very probable that this epistle was actually sent to Ephesus by the hand of Tychicus.

# EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

## CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

2 Grace *be* unto you, and

peace, from God our Father and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the

## CHAPTER I.

Philippi was one of the chief cities in Macedonia, and enjoyed the privileges of a Roman colony. See note on Acts xvi. 12. In that city Paul preached the gospel, and was scourged and imprisoned. His prison doors were miraculously opened, and the keeper of the prison was converted by the display of divine power. See Acts, ch. xvi. Paul visited Philippi a second time, accompanied by the representatives of several churches. Acts xx. 1-6. "The plain between Hæmus and Pangæus is the plain of Philippi, where the last battle was lost by the republicans of Rome, and now a Jewish apostle came to the same place, to win a greater victory than that of Philippi, and to found a more durable empire than that of Augustus. It is a fact of deep significance, that the first city at which St. Paul arrived, on his entrance into Europe, should be that colony, which was more fit than any other in the empire to be considered the representative of Imperial Rome."—*Conybeare*. This epistle is supposed to have been written at Rome, near the close of Paul's imprisonment, which continued "two whole years." Acts xxviii. 30. In other epistles, Paul had occasion to administer reproof; but this is filled

almost exclusively with commendations of the faith and good conduct of the Philippian Christians, and with expressions of thankfulness for their kindness and generosity to him.

1. *Paul and Timotheus*. See note on 1 Cor. i. 1. Timothy was a favorite disciple of Paul; see note on Rom. xvi. 21; and it seems peculiarly proper that his name should be thus used in the salutation, because he accompanied Paul on both his visits to the brethren at Philippi. Acts xvi. 1-13; xx. 1-6. ¶ *To all the saints*. Christians. See note on Eph. i. 1. ¶ *Bishops*. Or, overseers. See note on Acts xx. 28. ¶ *Deacons*. See note on Acts vi. 3.

2. *Grace be to you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

3-5. *I thank my God, &c.* Paul assures his brethren that they shared so largely in his affections, on account of their faith and obedience to the gospel, that they were always present in his mind when he offered thanksgivings or supplications, in prayer. Commentators differ in opinion as to the meaning of *fellowship in the gospel*, ver. 5. Conybeare translates "in forwarding the glad tidings." Barnes, with apparently good reason, adopts the opinion, that the phrase "refers to their liberality in contributing to the support of the

gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how

greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

12 But I would ye should un-

gospel, to their participating with others, or sharing what they had in common with others, for the maintenance of the gospel." In like manner Hammond paraphrases: "Your great liberality towards the propagating the gospel, which hath been observable in you since your first receiving the faith until this present time." The word *κοινωνία* *fellowship*, is translated *contributions*, Rom. xv. 26; *distribution*, 2 Cor. ix. 13; and *to communicate*, Heb. xiii. 16.

6. *He which hath begun, &c.* "It was on the fact that it was begun by God that he based his firm conviction that it would be permanent. Had it been the agency of man, he would have had no such conviction, for nothing that man does to-day can lay the foundation of a certain conviction that he will do the same thing to-morrow." — Barnes. ¶ *The day of Jesus Christ.* The day when the power of Jesus shall be manifestly displayed. This is sometimes styled the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. See note on 1 Cor. i. 7. The period to which reference is made was then near at hand; and the apostle rejoiced in the belief that his brethren would be preserved by almighty power until it should arrive.

7. *Even as it is meet, &c.* "I have every reason to hope this of you, as through the grace of God you have been partakers with me in defending and confirming the gospel, and have

kindly administered to me in all those necessities which I have suffered for its sake. — Gilpin. ¶ *Partakers of my grace.* Or, "partakers with me of grace," as in the margin. Paul frequently refers to the kindness manifested towards him by the church at Philippi. He had received sympathy when imprisoned, and his bodily wants had been supplied. Ch. iv. 10, 14, 18. He had been encouraged by their steadfastness in the faith and their fruitfulness in good works, feeling confident that his labor had not been in vain.

8. *God is my record, &c.* Or, witness. See note on Rom. i. 9. ¶ *The bowels of Jesus Christ.* See note on 2 Cor. vi. 12.

9. *That your love may abound, &c.* Love to God their Father, and to mankind their brethren; see Matt. xxii. 34-40; intelligent, judicious love; love for sufficient cause. See 1 John iv. 11, 19.

10. *That ye may approve things that are excellent.* Or, try or prove things that differ. See note on Rom. ii. 18. ¶ *Day of Christ.* See note on ver. 6.

11. *Fruits of righteousness.* Together with the generous liberality, mentioned in ver. 7, it is supposed that the apostle here includes the Christian virtues and graces generally; the virtues and graces which are the spontaneous fruit of the Spirit which purifies and sanctifies the heart.

derstand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other *places*;

14 And many of the brethren

in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of

12. *The things which happened unto me.* The words *which happened*, are properly supplied by the translators. The apostle probably refers to what his friends might have supposed disastrous to his success as a preacher of the gospel, as the opposition of the Jews which culminated in his arrest, his appeal to Cæsar, his transportation to Rome, and his confinement there as a state prisoner. All these circumstances, he assures them, conduce to the *furtherance*, or the more wide and effectual promulgation of the gospel, instead of hindering its progress. ¶ *Have fallen out.* "Have rather conducted." — *Haweis.* "Have tended rather." — *Conybeare.*

13. *So that my bonds in Christ, &c.* Paul was a prisoner, but not secluded from society. He dwelt "in his own hired house," closely attended by "a soldier that kept him." His bodily liberty was restrained, but he was free to preach the gospel, "no man forbidding him." Acts. xxviii. 16, 30, 31. In Rome he had access to a vastly greater audience than would have attended his ministry elsewhere, gathered from all parts of the known world, by whom a knowledge of the gospel was conveyed to the remotest lands. His opportunity for disseminating the word of truth through the world was therefore increased rather than diminished by his imprisonment at Rome. His cheerful submission to bonds, for the sake of Christ and his gospel, attracted the notice of those who frequented the "palace," as well as of the common people who visited "all other places" in the vast metropolis. Sympathy is always extended to those who cheerfully endure unjust persecution; and this gave Paul an additional influence.

14. *Many of the brethren, &c.* Many Christians. At the date of this epistle, many had been converted to Christianity, even in Rome. "The Christians at Rome were numerous before the apostle's arrival; but their number was greatly increased by his preaching, and by the preaching of his assistants. It is no wonder, then, that in all places of the city the real cause of the apostle's imprisonment and the true nature of the gospel were so well known." — *Macknight.* ¶ *Waxing confident by my bonds.* They see that what I suffer, I bear patiently, and are stimulated to assist in the work. They see that I incur no additional persecution by preaching the truth openly, and are encouraged to "speak the word without fear." See note on ver. 15.

15. *Of envy and strife.* "What was the ground of this envy and strife the apostle does not mention. It would seem, however, that even in Rome there was a party which was jealous of the influence of Paul, and which supposed that this was a good opportunity to diminish his influence, and to strengthen their own cause. He was not now at large, so as to be able to meet and confute them. They had access to the mass of the people. It was easy, under plausible pretences, to insinuate hints about the ambitious aims or improper influence of Paul, or to take strong ground against him and in favor of their own views, and they availed themselves of this opportunity. It would seem most probable, though this is not mentioned, that these persons were Judaizing teachers, professing Christianity, and who supposed that Paul's views were derogatory to the honor of Moses and the law." — *Barnes.*

16-18. *The one preach Christ, &c.*

contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in presence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation

through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

20 According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

The following paraphrase exhibits the apostle's meaning with tolerable clearness, and is substantially adopted by many commentators. "The former sort of these do it out of unkindness to me, not out of design seriously to advance the service of Christ, but they suppose they shall gall and grieve me thereby, and so add to my present sufferings. But others out of a sincere kindness towards me and the gospel, as knowing that what is befallen me is in defence of the gospel, or for my defending it, and consequently but duty in me who have not intruded myself, but am by Christ from heaven called and sent with commission for discharge of this office. And so, by one means or other, some to vex me, others out of respect to the word preached by me, do further propagate it; and though this is by the former sort done maliciously, and the good that comes from it be only accidental, not intended but only occasioned by them, yet it is matter of rejoicing to me that the gospel of Christ is preached and published by this means."—*Hammond*.

19. *To my salvation*, &c. "By salvation is meant deliverance out of his present sufferings, which he fully expected by the help and benefit of the church's prayers."—*Poole*. "This is one of the instances in which the word σωτηρια, *salvation*, is used by the inspired writers for deliverance from temporal evils. See Acts vii. 25; xxvii. 34. In this verse the apostle expressed a hope, that when the preaching of Christ as the king of the Jews

came to be reported in the palace, the emperor's domestics, who were Christians, would take occasion to explain the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and make all in the palace sensible that Paul was no enemy to Cæsar, nor a mover of sedition; and so contribute to his release."—*Macknight*. In this or in some other way Paul seems to have expected liberation from his bonds, ver. 25. But even death would be a welcome deliverance from earthly sufferings, ver. 23, if this should be the result of any new enmity excited against him by those who "preached Christ even of envy and strife." ¶ *Through your prayer*. See note on 2 Cor. i. 11. ¶ *Spirit of Jesus Christ*. See note on Rom. viii. 9.

20. *My earnest expectation*. See note on Rom. viii. 19. ¶ *In nothing I shall be ashamed*, &c. That I shall do nothing of which I need be ashamed. "That I shall express no pusillanimity in anything, but continue as constant as ever, and as bold to confess Christ and preach the gospel, and so, whether by life or death, advance the kingdom of Christ, by preaching it, if I live; by signing the truth with my blood, if I die."—*Hammond*.

21-24. See notes on 2 Cor. v. 1-8, and note on the resurrection, at the end of 1 Cor. ch. xvi.

21. *For me to live is Christ*, &c. "If I live, I live in Christ; if I die, I die in hope of everlasting mercy, and of setting the seal of martyrdom to the truth of the gospel."—*Gilpin*. "The

22 But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour; yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better :

meaning is evidently this: Christ is my life here by grace, and hereafter by glory. I live for him, I live to him, I live in him, I live by him; and if I be put to death, that shall no way endamage me, but rather bring me great advantage, in regard that thereby I shall exchange and gain heaven for earth, and a happy eternal life for this miserable and mortal."—*Assemb. Annot.*

22. *But if I live in the flesh, &c.* This passage is obscure, and has been variously translated and interpreted. "If it chance me to live in the flesh, that is to me fruitful for to work, and what to choose I wot not."—*Tyndale*. "But whether this life in the flesh shall be the fruit of my labor, and what I should choose, I know not."—*Conybeare*. "But if this life in the flesh be to me a fruitful employment in his gospel, what I should choose in this case, I cannot say."—*Wakefield*. "The meaning of this passage, which has given much perplexity to commentators, it seems to me is, If I live in the flesh, it will cost me labor, it will be attended, as it has been, with much effort and anxious care; and I know not which to prefer, whether to remain on the earth with these cares and the hope of doing good, or to go at once to a world of rest."—*Barnes*.

23. *I am in a strait betwixt two, &c.* It was difficult to decide which of the two he preferred; on his personal account one appeared "far better;" while the other seemed "more needful" to the brethren. ¶ *To depart and to be with Christ*. To die and to be received at once into that heavenly mansion which Christ had prepared for him. See John xiv. 1-3. It seems manifest that Paul expected the future life would immediately succeed the present, else why should he regard a

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith;

speedy death far better than a long life? If the future life be postponed until the final consummation of all things, he would attain it no sooner by dying at once than by living and laboring many years longer. If he believed the time of his admission to the immediate presence of Christ should substantially coincide with the period of his departure from the flesh, then it was perfectly natural that he should be "in a strait betwixt two," namely, the desire to be with Christ, and the desire to benefit his brethren; but if otherwise, his strait is not easily comprehended. "Paul believed that the soul of the Christian would be immediately with the Saviour at death. It was evidently his expectation that he would at once pass to his presence, and not that he would remain in an intermediate state to some far-distant period. The soul does not sleep at death. Paul expected to be with Christ, and to be conscious of the fact; to see him, and to partake of his glory."—*Barnes*.

24. *To abide in the flesh is more needful for you*. His brethren needed his assistance. The exhortation is, to grow not only "in grace," but also "in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. iii. 18. Apostolic instruction was necessary to such growth in grace and knowledge. Hence, it was needful for those who had but recently embraced the gospel, that they should be more fully instructed. The consciousness of such need on their part, together with his desire to obey his Master and to be serviceable to his fellow-Christians, induced Paul to encounter cheerfully the toils and labors, the obloquy and persecution, which attended the faithful proclamation of the gospel of Christ.

25. *And having this confidence*.

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and

see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is

Namely, that my continuance in the ministry of the gospel is "needful for you." ¶ *I know*, &c. Strong confidence is to be understood, rather than absolute knowledge, because the apostle intimates, in ver. 27, that he could not foresee the result with certainty. ¶ *I shall abide and continue*, &c. I shall abide in the flesh and continue in the work of the apostleship, "confirming the souls of the disciples." Acts xiv. 22.

26. *That your rejoicing*, &c. "If he was spared, his deliverance would be traced to Christ, and they would rejoice together in one who had so mercifully delivered him."—*Barnes*.

27. *Your conversation*. Your conduct; of course including words as well as actions. See note on 2 Cor. i. 12. ¶ *Whether I come and see you*. Whether I be delivered from imprisonment, and be permitted again to visit you. ¶ *Or else be absent*. Be retained in bonds at Rome, or perhaps banished to some distant land. ¶ *I may hear*, &c. The apostle expresses his strong anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his brethren, that they might be united in spirit and firm in the faith. See Eph. iv. 3.

28. *In nothing terrified by your adversaries*. Paul had suffered persecution at Philippi, Acts xvi. 12-40, and it was natural to apprehend that his brethren would also encounter the opposition of adversaries. Yet he had been supported in the midst of peril and pain, and he desired his brethren to trust confidently for like support and protection. They need not be terrified by their adversaries, while they trusted in God as a friend. See note on Rom. viii. 31. ¶ *Which is to them an evident token of perdition*, &c. "Which is indeed the proof of per-

dition to them, but of salvation to you, and that from God."—*Haweis*. Commentators differ in their interpretation of this passage. Some understand "perdition" to indicate endless misery, and "salvation" to indicate endless happiness; and these again differ between themselves, some supposing that the persecuting spirit manifested by the "adversaries" was a token of their own perdition, while others suppose the "adversaries" regarded the obstinacy of the Christians as a token of their perdition.—*So Macknight*. Others give a more general interpretation, without precisely defining the nature of perdition and salvation. "Let neither worldly fears nor worldly adversaries discompose you. The opposition of your enemies marks their hard and impenitent hearts, but brightens your hopes in the mercies of God, purifying your religious principles, as, I hope in God, it hath done mine, by adding suffering to faith."—*Gilpin*. To me it seems more probable that the apostle referred to that terrible judgment which was about to befall the Jewish nation and the adversaries of Christianity, and the preservation of those who believed and trusted in Christ. See notes on 2 Thess. i. 5-10, where I think the same perdition and salvation are mentioned. It is highly probable that these adversaries were Jews; because almost if not entirely all the persecutions of Christians mentioned in the Acts of the apostles were managed or instigated by Jews. "Whether or not they were Jews, must be left undecided. The probability is, however, that they were."—*Olshausen*. "There were Jews there who would be likely to oppose them, compare Acts xvii. 5, and they were exposed to persecution by the heathen."—*Barnes*.

to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

## CHAPTER II.

**I**F *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellow-

29. *Unto you it is given, &c.* To prove one's sincerity by suffering in the cause of Christ is often represented in the Scriptures as a privilege. Thus it is recorded concerning the apostles, that "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Acts v. 41. See also Col. i. 24; 1 Pet. iv. 13; and note on Rom. viii. 17, where this subject is discussed somewhat at large.

30. *Having the same conflict which ye saw in me.* That is, when Paul was imprisoned and scourged at Philippi, because he was a faithful minister of Christ. Acts, ch. xvi. ¶ *And now hear to be in me.* Paul was "in bonds" at Rome, ver. 7, when this epistle was written. His brethren at Philippi might see in him an example of patient endurance of quite as severe trials as they experienced at the hands of their adversaries.

## CHAPTER II.

1, 2. *If there be therefore, &c.* "The apostle here uses a great variety of expressions to denote the same thing. The object which he aimed at was union of heart, of feeling, of plan, of purpose. He wished them to avoid all divisions and strifes; and to show the power of religion by being united in the common cause. Probably there is no single thing so much insisted on in the New Testament as the importance of har-

ship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

3 *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of

mony among Christians. Now there is almost nothing so little known; but if it prevailed, the world would soon be converted to God. Comp. notes on John xvii. 21, or see the text itself without the notes."—*Barnes*.

3. *Let nothing be done through strife, &c.* This exhortation is substantially like that in ch. i. 27. ¶ *In lowliness of mind, &c.* In humility. The same word occurs in Acts xx. 19; Col. ii. 18, 23; 1 Pet. v. 5. See note on Rom. xii. 3.

4. *Look not every man on his own things, &c.* Be not selfish. "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Rom. xiv. 7. Our Lord has taught us that the second "great commandment"—second in importance only to that which requires us to love God supremely—is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. xxii. 39. If we cherish such love, we shall not fail to respect the rights of others, while we assert and exercise our own.

5–8. *Let this mind be in you, &c.* "Here the common version makes the apostle say of Christ that 'he thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' This has been considered a decisive argument that Christ is God; though it is an absurdity to say, of any being, that 'he thought it not robbery to be equal with himself.' Perhaps no text, however, has been more frequently quoted or referred to. But it now



God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath

highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

seems to be generally conceded that the words have been mistranslated. The whole passage may be thus rendered: 'Let the same disposition (let the same humility and benevolence) be in you which was in Jesus Christ, who being as God did not think that his equality with God was to be eagerly retained; but divested himself of it, and made himself as a servant, and was as men are, and, being in the common condition of man, humbled himself, and was submissive, even to death, the death of the cross.' Christ was 'in the form of God,' or 'the image of God,' or 'as God;' he was 'like God,' or he was 'equal with God' (the latter words being correctly understood); because he was a minister in the hands of God, wholly under his direction; because his words were the words of God, his miracles the works of the Father who sent him, and his authority as a teacher and legislator that of the Almighty, not human, but divine. Yet, notwithstanding that he bore the high character of God's messenger and representative to men, with all the powers connected with it, he was not eager to display that character, or exercise those powers, for the sake of any personal advantage, or of assuming any rank or splendor corresponding to his pre-eminence over all other men. 'Being rich, for our sakes he became poor.' He divested himself as it were of his powers, lowered himself to the condition of common men, lived as they live, exposed to their deprivations and sufferings, and voluntarily, as if

weak as they, submitted to an ignominious and torturing death. When it is affirmed that Christ made himself a servant, these words are illustrated by those which he himself used, while inculcating, like the apostle, the virtues of humility and benevolence, with a like reference to his own example; 'the *Son* of man came not to be served, but to serve.' Matt. xx. 28. It is in imitation of his example, that he directs him 'who would be greatest among his disciples, to become the servant of all.'—*Norton*.

9-11. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c.* The exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ, consequent upon his death on the cross, is referred to by himself, John xvii. 4, 5, and by Peter, on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 25, 33. We have a similar testimony in Heb. ii. 9. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." In his exalted state he is constituted the "head of every man," 1 Cor. xi. 3, in whom all created souls shall in due time be gathered, Eph. i. 10, and become new creatures, 2 Cor. v. 17. The universal extent of Christ's beneficent reign is set forth in this passage with equal distinctness. That the terms used are certainly broad enough to embrace all human souls is admitted by many commentators, who failed to apprehend fully the glorious consummation of the divine purpose.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own

salvation with fear and trembling:

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven,—the angelic hosts must do honor to him as Saviour; and of things on earth,—men must do the same; and of things under the earth,—all who are in the state of the dead must do this. And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of all, as well as Saviour, and thereby advance the glory of God the Father," &c. — *Macknight*. "In the great divisions here specified,—of those in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth,—the apostle intends, doubtless, to denote the universe. The same mode of designating the universe occurs in Rev. v. 13; Exo. xx. 4. Comp. Ps. xevi. 11, 12." — *Barnes*. "Things in heaven, earth, and under the earth, is a common periphrasis of the Hebrew and New Testament writers, for the universe. What can be meant by things in heaven, i. e., beings in heaven, bowing the knee to Jesus, if spiritual worship be not meant? What other worship can heaven render? And if the worship of Christ in heaven be spiritual, should not that of others, who ought to be united with them, be spiritual also?" — *Stuart*. If all souls in the whole universe thus render spiritual homage and worship to Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father, is it conceivable that any shall remain eternally estranged, and rebellious, and miserable?

12. *As ye have always obeyed, &c.* Paul frequently commends the brethren at Philippi for their faith, good works generally, and kindness and generosity to him in particular. See ch. iv. 10, 15, 16. ¶ *Work out your own salvation.* "Perform your own health." — *Tyndale*. The idea is, that they should strive to attain that moral purity, and freedom from the power of sin, which the gospel is designed to accomplish in the hearts of believers. Sin is represented as

a hurtful malady; and deliverance from its power as a restoration to health. A foretaste of final and perfect deliverance is granted, even in this life, to those who honestly and earnestly seek it in the manner prescribed in the gospel. ¶ *With fear and trembling.* "'With anxiety and self-distrust' is a nearer representation of the Pauline phrase, than the literal English of the word, 'with fear and trembling,' as appears by the use of the same phrase, 1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 15; Eph. vi. 5." — *Conybeare*. He had previously exhorted them to be humble, in ver. 3, 4, and what follows; and he now urges them to strive for moral purity, not in a spirit of rivalry, not "through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind," anxiously and humbly. They were to seek spiritual health, because they needed it.

13. *For it is God which worketh, &c.* "The exhortation addressed to the Philippians, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, is further enforced by the consideration here presented to them, that it is not they, but God, who gives them to will and to do, whereby all self-glorying is removed, all ground for seeking to display their own importance is taken away." — *Olshausen*. A similar idea is expressed by the apostle in Eph. ii. 8, 9. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Salvation, whether present or final, is the fruit of divine grace; and all proper efforts of men to obtain either are stimulated by the same grace, *working* in them. Paul did not boast of his labors on his own behalf, or on the behalf of others, but humbly ascribed praise to a higher power. "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1 Cor. xv. 10. And the blessed Son of God,

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

highly as he was exalted, acknowledged that all his power and sufficiency was derived from the Father. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John xiv. 10. But because God is the original source of all good gifts and good influences, we are not to conclude we should fold our hands in idleness. Paul planted and Apollos watered, notwithstanding they knew that God alone could give the increase, 1 Cor. iii. 6, and because they knew that the giving of the increase necessarily involved the planting and watering. The husbandman would be unwise to neglect tilling his ground and sowing his seed because the harvest is one of God's gifts. Equally unwise is he who neglects to strive earnestly and persistently to break off his sins by righteousness, and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," Tit. ii. 12, because he believes that deliverance from sinfulness is the gift of God. We should diligently endeavor to attain moral purity, remembering always, so far as our efforts shall be successful, to give praise to God for *working in us to do his pleasure*, rather than to indulge pride and vainglory, as though by our own uninfluenced will we had made the attempt, and had grasped the prize by our own unaided strength.

14. *Do all things without murmurings and disputings.* This exhortation is in perfect accordance with the spirit of the preceding verses. True humility will induce Christians to avoid all occasion of strife.

15. *Sons of God.* See note on Rom. viii. 14. ¶ *A crooked and perverse generation.* See note on Acts ii. 40, where the same word (*σκολιὰς*) oc-

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

curs, and is translated *untoward*. It is generally supposed that the reference is to the Jews, who at Philippi as elsewhere were bitter opposers of Christianity and its professors. ¶ *Ye shine as lights in the world.* Or, *shine ye*, as in the margin. The original may be properly enough translated in either way. See note on Matt. v. 16.

16. *Word of life.* The gospel, which promises life. ¶ *Day of Christ.* See note on 2 Cor. i. 14. The previous reference to "a crooked and perverse generation," ver. 15, renders it probable that the apostle here refers to that *day*, then near at hand, when a visible and remarkable distinction should be made between the believing Christians and the unbelieving Jews. ¶ *That I have not run in vain, &c.* That my preaching, which has been the occasion of much persecution and personal suffering, has not been unprofitable to you. Their steadfastness in the faith afforded proof that his preaching was effectual.

17. *If I be offered.* Or, *poured forth*, as in the margin. "Should I become the victim."—*Haweis*. "Though my blood be poured forth."—*Conybeare*. The previous reference to persecutions, already endured, naturally suggested the idea of martyrdom. He hoped for deliverance from his present imprisonment, ver. 24; yet he knew that the Jews thirsted for his blood, and had good reason to apprehend that they would persist in their efforts to destroy him. The word *σπένδομαι* occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in 2 Tim. iv. 6, where the idea of martyrdom is distinctly embraced. "The apostle, considering the faith of the Gentiles as an offering to God, speaks of his own blood as a libation, like that of the wine and

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

oil poured on the meat-offerings, to render them acceptable to God, Exo. xxix. 40, 41. This costly libation Paul was most willing to pour on the offering of the faith of the Gentiles, to render it more firm, and of consequence more pleasing to the Deity."—*Mac-knight*. ¶ *I joy and rejoice, &c.* I rejoice in your spiritual prosperity, whatever present inconvenience or suffering it may cost me, even though it be martyrdom.

18. *For the same cause also do ye joy, &c.* "That is, Do not grieve at my death. Be not overwhelmed with sorrow, but let your hearts be filled with congratulation. It will be a privilege and a pleasure thus to die."—*Barnes*. It is a source of pleasure, moreover, to the sincere Christian, that his brethren, especially that his religious teachers, remain faithful until death.

19. *To send Timotheus, &c.* Although it is not recorded in the Acts of the apostles that Timothy accompanied Paul when he preached at Philippi, yet it is evident from ver. 20–22 that he did so, and for this reason he was a peculiarly fit messenger to be sent on this mission.

20. *I have no man like-minded.* Or, *so dear unto me*, as in the margin. Timothy was the favorite disciple of Paul, and shared perhaps more fully than any other in his desire and in his efforts for the conversion of the Gentiles. Paul selected him as a messenger, more likely than any other, to labor for the benefit of the church at Philippi.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus,

21. *For all seek their own, &c.* "That is, the greater part; for he excepteth Timothy and Epaphroditus; and his meaning is, that it is a vice incident to most, to prefer their own profit and worldly ends before the glory of Christ."—*Assemb. Annot.* "When the trial of Paul came on before the emperor, all who were with him in Rome fled from him, 2 Tim. iv. 16; and it is possible that the same disregard of his wishes and his welfare had already begun to manifest itself among the Christians who were at Rome, so that he was constrained to say that as a general thing they sought their own ease and comfort, and were unwilling to deny themselves in order to promote the happiness of those who lived in the remote parts of the world."—*Barnes*.

22. *Ye know the proof, &c.* You have witnessed his faithfulness in the ministry, his attachment to me, and his willingness to share my labors.

23. *So soon as I shall see, &c.* Paul was now a prisoner at Rome, and his trial was approaching. It was not revealed to him what the result should be. He hoped for deliverance, ver. 24, but nevertheless was conscious of imminent peril. He preferred to delay the sending of Timothy, until the result should be ascertained, so that he might communicate the intelligence to the Philippians.

24. *But I trust in the Lord, &c.* Paul had a strong hope that his life should be spared yet a little longer, that he might be further useful in his ministry; and he was not disappointed.

25. *Yet I supposed it necessary to*

my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye

see him again, ye may rejoice and that I may be the less sorrowful.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:

30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

### CHAPTER III.

**F**INALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to

*send to you Epaphroditus, &c.* This disciple seems to have been a member of the church at Philippi, sent to Rome with gifts to Paul, ch. iv. 18, a faithful laborer with him in preaching the gospel, who had sacrificed health and put his life at hazard "for the work of Christ," ver. 30, but had been restored to health, ver. 27. Without waiting for the result of his own trial, ver. 23, he sent this disciple, that the anxiety of his friends might be relieved, ver. 28; and it is generally supposed that this epistle was sent to Philippi by him.

26. *For he longed after you all, &c.* It grieved him that you should suffer anxiety on his account.

27. *But God had mercy on him.* "Epaphroditus was not recovered by the gift of healing, then frequent in the church, that gift being not exercised by them to whom it was imparted at their own pleasure, but as God was pleased by a special instinct and a strong faith to incite them to the exercise of it; these gifts being therefore given for the sake of unbelievers, to convince them of the truth of the Christian faith, God thought not fit that it should be ordinarily exercised upon believers, lest it should be looked upon, not as a gift, but as the effect of art or skill, or a thing done among them by confederacy."—*Whitby*. ¶ *But on me also, &c.* Paul acknowledges the recovery

of this beloved and useful disciple as a special act of mercy to himself.

28. *I sent him therefore, &c.* That his friends may be relieved from anxious forebodings, "and that I may be the less sorrowful," knowing that you are rejoicing in his recovery.

29. *Receive him therefore in the Lord, &c.* "As the servant of the Lord, or as now restored to you by the Lord, and therefore to be regarded as a fresh gift from God."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Hold such in reputation.* Honor him, not only for his faithful services to you, but for exposing his life at Rome, ver. 30.

30. *Because for the work of Christ, &c.* Either on his journey upon a mission of mercy, ch. iv. 18, or in the work of the ministry at Rome, he exposed himself to sickness, and "was nigh unto death." ¶ *To supply your lack, &c.* Performing services which you could not personally render. It is manifest that Paul does not intend to complain of any "lack of service" on the part of the Philippians; they only "lacked opportunity." He commends their care of him, and thanks them for being mindful of him in his affliction. See ch. iv. 10, 14.

### CHAPTER III.

1. *Rejoice in the Lord.* That is, in the Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 3. ¶ *To write the same things to you.* The same things which he had communicated

me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

during his personal ministry at Philippi. ¶ *To me indeed is not grievous.* Although a prisoner, and in doubt what the result might be, ch. ii. 23, Paul felt a lively interest in the condition of the churches which he had planted, and would not have them think that he regarded any labor for their benefit as irksome or troublesome. ¶ *For you it is safe.* They would be more secure, if their pure minds were stirred up by way of remembrance, 2 Pet. iii. 1, in regard to the great truths revealed in the gospel. A somewhat different view of the apostle's design is expressed thus: "The condemnation of the errors of the Judaizers, which the apostle was about to write in this chapter, he had already written in his epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. Also he had desired Epaphroditus to tell the same things to the Philippians by word of mouth; but as they were matters of great importance, he did not grudge to write them in this letter; because, if they were only communicated to them by Epaphroditus verbally, all the Philippians might not have had an opportunity of hearing them; or they might have misunderstood them. Whereas, having them in writing, they could examine them at their leisure, and have recourse to them as often as they had occasion."—*Macknight*.

2. *Beware of dogs, &c.* By the several terms of reproach used in this verse, the apostle is generally understood to refer to the unbelieving Jews and Judaizing Christians. The idea is briefly expressed thus: "The Judaizers are here described by three epithets: the dogs, because of their uncleanness (of which that animal was the type; compare 2 Pet. ii. 22); 'the evil workmen' (not equivalent to *evil workers*), for the same reason that they are called 'deceitful workmen' in 2 Cor. xi. 13; and the 'concision,' to distinguish them from the true circum-

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

cision, the spiritual Israel."—*Conybeare*. In the original, *κατατομή concision*, signifies "a cutting off, mutilation."—*Robinson*. It may be necessary or unnecessary; serviceable or hurtful. "Beware of the concision, for such I must call that body of men which proudly usurps the name of the circumcision, whereas the external rite they so much contend for is but an unprofitable cutting and mangling of the flesh, when performed from such principles and imposed with such a temper; so that the bloody work of it may seem an emblem of the cruel manner in which they cut and mangle the church."—*Doddridge*.

3. *We are the circumcision, &c.* "We who are Christians. We have and hold the true doctrine of circumcision. We have that which was intended to be secured by this rite, for we are led to renounce the flesh and to worship God in the spirit. The apostle in this verse teaches that the ordinance of circumcision was not designed to be a mere *outward* ceremony, but was intended to be emblematic of the renunciation of the flesh with its corrupt propensities, and to lead to the pure and spiritual worship of God."—*Barnes*. The Christian circumcision consists "in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," Col. ii. 11. Thus *baptism*, the corresponding rite in the Christian church, properly understood, indicates, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God." 1 Pet. iii. 21. The outward sign profited little without the spiritual purity denoted by it. The holy martyr Stephen denounced the Jews who clamored for his destruction as "stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," Acts vii. 51, although doubtless they were circumcised in the flesh. See notes on Rom. ii. 28, 29.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more :

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecut-

ing the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss

4. *I might have confidence in the flesh.* Paul could not be accused of undervaluing ceremonial righteousness because he was destitute of it. On the contrary, if any one might justly boast of this kind of righteousness, he might boast even more, as he shows in ver. 5, 6. See 2 Cor. xi. 22-27.

5. *Circumcised the eighth day.* Precisely as the ritual law required. Gen. xvii. 12. ¶ *Of the stock of Israel.* Not a proselyte, but a lineal descendant from Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, or Israel. ¶ *Of the tribe of Benjamin.* A member of a tribe which never revolted; a tribe having peculiar honor among the Jews. ¶ *A Hebrew of the Hebrews.* "This is the Hebrew mode of expressing the superlative degree; and the idea is, that Paul enjoyed every advantage which could possibly be derived from the fact of being a Hebrew." — *Barnes*. See note on 2 Cor. xi. 22. ¶ *As touching the law a Pharisee.* See notes on Acts xxiii. 6; xxvi. 5. The Pharisees were much more strict and punctilious than the Sadducees in the observance of the law.

6. *Concerning zeal, persecuting the church.* He had manifested his zeal for the law by persecuting the Christians, whose doctrines he supposed tended to bring the law into disrepute. See Acts viii. 1, 3; ix. 1; xxvi. 9-11. ¶ *Touching the righteousness, &c.* "Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers," Acts xxii. 3, Paul had carefully observed its precepts, and doubtless felt justified as fully as the young

man mentioned in Matt. xix. 20. If any one therefore could be justified by the deeds of the law, Paul would seem to be that man.

7. *But what things were gain to me.* The outward advantages of birth, education, and conformity to the requisitions of the law, which seemed to be profitable to me, and to exalt me above others. ¶ *Those I counted loss for Christ.* The benefits resulting from these are so much less than the benefits derived from Christ though faith in him, that I regard them comparatively as loss. We are not to understand that conscientious observance of law is *actual* loss; but man's righteousness is so much less valuable than the righteousness of God, ver. 9, that in the comparison it seems to be a negative quantity.

8. *And I count all things but loss.* Not only the particular advantages enumerated in ver. 5, 6, but all things whatsoever which might be brought into competition with the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ. ¶ *For the excellency of the knowledge, &c.* "Literally, because of the supereminence of the knowledge of Christ, i. e., because the knowledge of Christ surpasses all things else." — *Conybeare*. ¶ *For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, &c.* The apostle probably refers not so much to the advantages previously enumerated, which he had renounced, as to other sacrifices attending his profession of Christianity. He had lost his social position attained by knowledge and observance of the law; he had lost the opportunity of advancement to posts of honor and profit; he had lost the esteem and respect former-

of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffer-

ly accorded to him by his nation, and perhaps the friendship of his own family. In all probability, he had also been cast out of the synagogue, or excommunicated, for his heresy. John ix. 22. All these things, however valuable in themselves, he regarded as refuse in comparison with the advantage of becoming a true disciple of Christ.

9. *And be found in him.* "That is, united to him by a living faith." — Barnes. ¶ *Not having mine own righteousness, &c.* For the distinction made by Paul between human or legal righteousness and the righteousness of God, see notes on Rom. i. 17; x. 3, 4.

10. *The power of his resurrection.* "That is, the power exercised in his resurrection, by which we are begotten to a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, 1 Pet. i. 4, and are assured of our own resurrection, 2 Cor. iv. 14; Col. ii. 12; this being that knowledge he so earnestly requests for his Ephesians, ch. i. 19, 20, and also the power of it, to assure us of our justification through faith in him, Rom. iv. 24, 25, and of our freedom from condemnation, Rom. viii. 34." — Whitby. ¶ *The fellowship of his sufferings.* A willing participation in such sufferings as Christ endured. This was regarded by Paul as an evidence of true discipleship. See note on Rom. viii. 17. ¶ *Being made conformable unto his death.* Jesus died in attestation of his sincerity and truthfulness, and sealed his testimony in his own blood. Paul cherished a similar spirit. He was willing to endure tribulation and even death on behalf of that gospel which his Master had com-

ings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not my-

missioned him to preach. See notes on Acts xx. 24; xxi. 13.

11. *I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.* It is evident, from ver. 12, that Paul does not here refer to the literal resurrection into immortal life. That resurrection succeeds the death of the natural body. It would be absurd for a living man to assert gravely that he was not yet thus raised from the dead, as if there were any possible doubt of the fact. Moreover, the apostle always represents the final resurrection of all men as fixed in the purpose of God, 1 Cor. xv. 22, not as dependent on the exertions of men. He refers here to that spiritual resurrection into newness of life, which he mentions Eph. ii. 1, and which our Lord describes as the result of true faith in him, John v. 24. See note on Rom. vi. 4.

12. *Not as though I had already attained, &c.* That is, fully attained, as is indicated by the equivalent phrase, "either were already perfect." Paul felt an assurance, and rejoiced in it, that he had been made a partaker of the spiritual resurrection mentioned in the previous verse, yet he was conscious that he had not yet attained perfection; that is, that his resurrection or deliverance from the power of sin was not yet complete. He gives a vivid description of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, the old man and the new, in Rom. vii. 14-25. He hoped for absolute deliverance, but knew he had not yet attained it; and this he *followed after*, that he might enjoy the blessing in its fulness.

13, 14. *I count not myself to have*



self to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us

walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* their belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

*apprehended, &c.* Or, "to have laid hold thereon."—*Conybeare*. Substantially the same idea is repeated here which is expressed in ver. 12. The apostle acknowledges that he has not yet attained perfect or absolute moral purity, and declares his anxiety and intention to reach it, if possible, by the diligent use of all the means which God has placed within his reach. He clothes his ideas in language applicable to the Grecian games, especially the foot-race, as in 1 Cor. ix. 24–27. Some suppose that by his "high calling" he referred to the apostleship to which he had been called by God, Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1; he was willing to sacrifice even his life in the performance of its duties. Acts xx. 24. Or he may be understood in a more general sense, as in Eph. iv. 1, to refer to the "vocation" or calling of all disciples to strive for moral purity.

15. *As many as be perfect, &c.* "Or, rather, those who would be perfect, or who are aiming at perfection. It can hardly be supposed that the apostle would address them as already perfect, when he had just said of himself that he had not attained to that state."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Be thus minded*. Be equally desirous of advancement in moral purity, and a nearer approximation to perfection. ¶ *Otherwise minded*. Allusion is probably had to those who sought perfection through conformity to the ritual law, rather than "through the faith of Christ," ver. 9. ¶ *God*

*shall reveal, &c.* "If any have not yet gotten entirely over his Jewish scruples, let him not be discouraged; God will, by degrees, remove them."—*Gilpin*.

16. *Walk by the same rule, &c.* Although some Christians have grown more rapidly than others "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. iii. 18, yet all should strive together for further advancement, and for a nearer approach to perfection.

17. *Be followers together of me, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. iv. 16. ¶ *Mark them which walk so, &c.* Observe and honor those who conduct according to my example. See note on 1 Cor. xvi. 16.

18, 19. *For many walk, &c.* See notes on Rom. xvi. 17, 18, where the same class of men is described in similar terms. ¶ *Whose end is destruction, &c.* Reference is probably had to that terrible judgment which was about to befall the Jewish nation. "Their notions and views of religion are all temporal, and their chief aim is at the gratification of their sensual appetites and pleasures; they boast in what they ought to be ashamed of; and, for such irreclaimable prejudices and practices, God will destroy their whole nation with a most exemplary destruction."—*Pyle*. They shall "be destroyed with the Jews in their approaching ruin. 2 Pet. ii. 1."—*Hammond*. "The persons meant were men who led

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

licentious lives (like the Corinthian free-thinkers), and they are called 'enemies of the cross,' because the cross was the symbol of mortification." — *Conybeare*. Or, perhaps, as the cross was the symbol of that gospel which revealed "the righteousness of God," these persons are styled its "enemies," because "going about to establish their own righteousness they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Rom. i. 17; x. 3.

20. *For our conversation is in heaven, &c.* "The original *πολίτευμα*, *conversation*, signifieth more than can be expressed in one word in our vulgar language. The full meaning is, we look higher than the earth; we set our affection upon the things that are above; we carry ourselves like fellow-citizens of saints; there we live according to the laws of heaven; and here on earth in part enjoy the privileges of the celestial Jerusalem." — *Assemb. Annot.*

21. *Who shall change our vile body, &c.* "Our body of humiliation." — *Haweis*. ¶ *That it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, &c.* See 1 Cor. xv. 49. The apostle here refers to the proper "resurrection of the dead," which he discusses at large in 1 Cor. ch. xv. The material or natural body is to be succeeded by the spiritual body, similar to that in which our Lord was clothed when he ascended up on high. The phraseology indicates a change in the character of the body, a glorification of what was before in a state of humiliation, rather than an utter destruction of the natural body and the creation of a new

## CHAPTER IV.

THEREFORE, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I entreat thee also,

spiritual body. See note on the resurrection, at the end of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. ¶ *Subdue all things unto himself*. Hence all the benefits of the resurrection may be expected to extend to the whole human family. Their bodies shall be changed, and their hearts be cleansed and softened. See note on 1 Cor. xv. 28. Thus shall they be "the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke xx. 36.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. *Therefore, &c.* This verse might better have been left in the preceding chapter, when the division was made. At least, it has an immediate dependence on the previous discourse; and the faithful brethren, on whom many terms of endearment are lavished, are exhorted to "stand fast in the Lord," confidently believing that in due time they should become subjects of the glorious change mentioned in ch. iii. 21.

2. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, &c.* These persons are not named elsewhere in the New Testament. It would seem that they had been prominent members of the church at Philippi; that unpleasant relations existed between them; and that Paul desired that they should become reconciled.

3. *True yoke-fellow.* The name of the person here addressed is not known. It may be supposed that he had been so active in promoting the welfare of Paul when he was at Philippi, that all the brethren would recognize him at once by this description. ¶ *Help those*

true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellow labourers, whose names *are* in the book of life.

women, &c. "The common opinion is, that the women here referred to were Euodias and Syntyche, and that the office which the friend of Paul was asked to perform was to secure a reconciliation between them. There is, however, no certain evidence of this. The reference seems rather to be to influential females who had rendered important assistance to Paul when he was there. The kind of help which was to be imparted was probably counsel and friendly co-operation in the duties which they were called to perform."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Which labored with me in the gospel*. Not as preachers, but in some other capacity, perhaps as deaconesses. See 1 Tim. ii. 12. ¶ *Clement*. Some of the ancients supposed this to be Clement of Rome; but nothing is known of him with certainty, except that he is here represented as worthy of honor for his labors in behalf of the gospel at Philippi. ¶ *Whose names are in the book of life*. The following note is substantially in the language of Dr. Hammond: "The book of life refers to the custom of well-ordered cities, which kept registers containing all the names of the citizens. Out of these registers, apostates, and fugitives, and infamous persons, were erased, agreeably to which there is mention of 'blotting names out of the book of life,' Rev. iii. 5; so the names of those who continued obedient, orderly citizens were still continued in. Accordingly, since 'life' in this place signifies spiritual life, the state of grace and favor of God, the beginning of that future eternal life, therefore, 'the book of life' here is the register of all sincere Christians, as 'the book of the living,' in the Psalmist, is the number of men that live in this world, from which they are expunged that cease to be such."—*D'Oyly and Mant*.

4. *Rejoice in the Lord*. Whatever

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but

trials or persecutions you may endure from your adversaries, rejoice in the Lord, who is able to deliver you out of their hands, ver. 5.

5. *Let your moderation be known, &c.* "Let your forbearance be known."—*Conybeare*. The word *ἐπιεικής* is used in only four other places in the New Testament: 1 Tim. iii. 3, where it is translated *patient*, and Tit. iii. 2; Jas. iii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 18, in all which places it is translated *gentle*. Paul would have his brethren endure persecution patiently, and manifest a gentle spirit even towards their persecutors. ¶ *The Lord is at hand*. "And therefore let your patient enduring of them be discernible to all; and to this you may receive encouragement, by considering that ye are not likely to expect long: The famous coming of Christ in judgment visibly to punish his crucifiers, and to shorten the power of the persecutors, and rescue all faithful, patient sufferers out of their hands all the world over, in Greece as well as in Judea, is now approaching. See Heb. x. 37."—*Hammond*. *Ἐγγυς* signifies *nigh*, either in respect of place or time. Here I understand it of *place*. The Lord is beside you, observing your behavior. If it is understood of *time*, the meaning is, the Lord will soon come and destroy the Jewish commonwealth; so that the power of one class at least of your enemies will shortly be at an end."—*Macknight*.

6. *Be careful for nothing, &c.* Be not anxious; be not over-much solicitous. See note on Matt. vi. 25, where the same word is translated, "take no thought." ¶ *But in everything, &c.* Our dependence on God for all blessings is always to be recognized and acknowledged; and our thanksgivings should perpetually ascend to him for his great goodness. See notes on Matt. vii. 7-11.

in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in

me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

7. *And the peace of God, &c.* See note on Rom. v. 1. ¶ *Which passeth all understanding.* Which surpasses the highest conceptions of those who have not experienced it in their own hearts. The phraseology is somewhat similar to that in 1 Cor. ii. 9. "Thus the peace of God, which can be felt only, not described, shall keep both your affections and your understanding in a blessed composure through Christ."—*Gilpin.*

8. *Think on these things.* Think on your obligation to cultivate all the Christian graces and to practise all the Christian virtues.

9. *Those things which ye have both learned, &c.* Paul was conscious that he had preached the gospel faithfully, Acts xx. 20, 27, and that he had walked discreetly and uprightly; he therefore exhorted the Philippians to imitate him, as in ch. iii. 17. Happy is the minister of Christ, who can enjoy the testimony of a good conscience, while he thus exhorts his brethren. ¶ *God of peace.* See note on Rom. xv. 33.

10. *That now at the last your care of me hath flourished again.* Or, *is revived, as in the margin.* "Borne fruit

again."—*Conybeare.* It is implied that for a considerable period previously the apostle had not received similar tokens of their loving care. ¶ *Ye lacked opportunity.* It was not their fault, however, that they had not sooner or more frequently ministered to his necessities. Instead of rebuking them for their inattention, the apostle praises them because they "were careful," and only "lacked opportunity" to minister to his wants.

11. *Not that I speak in respect of want.* Doubtless Paul often suffered "want." In describing what persecutions and afflictions he had encountered for the sake of the gospel, 2 Cor. xi. 23–27, he expressly mentions "hunger and thirst." But he had learned "to be content," in "whatsoever state" he might be. He had learned that outward afflictions were more than counterbalanced by a peaceful trust in God. He refers to what he has suffered, that he may thank his brethren, ver. 14, for their kindness in supplying his wants.

12. *I know both how to be abased, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. iv. 11–13; 2 Cor. xi. 27.

13. *I can do all things, &c.* "I

14 Notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and

abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All the saints salute you,

---

am enabled for all things by Christ who strengtheneth me." — *Haweis*. "The word in the original signifieth not properly I can *do* all things, but I am *able* for all things; namely, those things he mentioned before, which were rather passions than actions, as to be abased and to suffer need, &c." — *Assemb. Annot.* In bearing such oppressive burdens Paul acknowledges the sustaining aid of his Master, even as in all his active labors, 1 Cor. xv. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

14. *Ye have well done*, &c. Notwithstanding he could contentedly endure hunger, and thirst, and cold, and nakedness, the benefactions of his brethren were grateful, because they contributed to his physical comfort, and especially because he was thus assured that he was not forgotten by them for whom he had labored. It was *well* for the brethren at Philippi, also, that they thus communicated with his affliction, for their own hearts were benefited by this labor of love and benevolence.

15-17. *Now ye Philippians know also*, &c. He assures them that they had contributed more for the supply of his wants than all the other churches. In this he rejoiced, not

only on his own account, but on theirs, inasmuch as he knew that they would receive into their own bosoms a blessed reward for their kindness to him, — the proper fruit of Christianity, ver. 17, 19.

18. *But I have all*, &c. Your present by Epaphroditus has supplied all my present wants; it demands my grateful acknowledgments; and it is such a gift as God approves.

19. *But my God shall supply*, &c. I cannot repay your kindness; but God will reward you. You have ministered to my temporal wants; God will abundantly "supply your need" both temporal and spiritual.

20. *Now unto God*, &c. See note on Rom. xiv. 27.

21. *Salute every saint*, &c. See Rom. xvi., where many such like salutations occur. ¶ *The brethren which are with me*. "As the brethren are distinguished from the saints, ver. 22, they are supposed to be his fellow-laborers in the gospel, mentioned in the end of his epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon." — *MacKnight*.

22. *All the saints*. The Christians at Rome. ¶ *Chiefly they that are of Cesar's household*. See note on ch. i. 13.

chiefly they that are of Cesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord

---

23. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20.

The subscription to this epistle in

Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

¶ It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus.

---

all probability is true, though not of canonical authority. There is reasonable internal evidence that "it was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus."

## EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

### CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother,

### CHAPTER I.

Colosse was "a city of Phrygia, which stood not far from the junction of the river Lycus with the Meander; being situated at an equal distance between Laodicea and Hierapolis. These three cities were destroyed by an earthquake, according to Eusebius, in the tenth year of Nero, that is, about two years after the date of Paul's epistle. Some believe that the apostle never visited this place, though he preached in Phrygia; but that the Colossians received the gospel from Epaphras. Paul, having been informed, either by Epaphras, then a prisoner with him at Rome (A. D. 62), or by a letter from the Laodiceans, that false prophets at Colosse had preached the necessity of legal observances, wrote that epistle to Colosse which we now have, in which he insists on Jesus Christ being the only mediator with God, and true head of the church. His letter was carried to the Colossians by Tychicus, his faithful minister, and Onesimus."—*Calmet*. See note on ch. ii. 1. "The letter to the Colossians itself gives us distinct information as to the cause which induced St. Paul to write it. Epaphras, the founder of that church (Col. i. 7), was now at Rome, and he had communicated to the apostle the unwelcome tidings, that the faith of the Colossians was in danger of being perverted by false teaching. It has been questioned whether several dif-

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

ferent systems of error had been introduced among them, or whether the several errors combated in the epistle were parts of one system and taught by the same teachers. On the one side, we find that in the epistle St. Paul warns the Colossians *separately* against the following different errors: first, a combination of angel-worship and asceticism; secondly, a self-styled *philosophy* or *gnosis*, which depreciated Christ; thirdly, a rigid observance of Jewish festivals and sabbaths. On the other side, first, the epistle seems distinctly (though with an indirectness caused by obvious motives) to point to a single source, and even a single individual, as the origin of the errors introduced; and, secondly, we know that at any rate the two first of these errors, and apparently the third, also, were combined by some of the early Gnostics. The most probable view, therefore, seems to be, that some Alexandrian Jew had appeared at Colosse, professing a belief in Christianity, and imbued with the Greek philosophy of the school of Philo, but combining with it the Rabbinical theosophy and angelology which afterwards was embodied in the Kabbala, and an extravagant asceticism which also afterwards distinguished several sects of the Gnostics. In short, one of the first heresiarchs of the incipient Gnosticism had begun to pervert the Colossians from the simplicity of their faith."—*Conybeare*.

1. Paul an apostle, &c. See notes on 2

3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,

5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

6 Which is come unto you, as

*it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard of *it*, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also,

Cor. i. 1; Phil. i. 1. It is worthy of notice that although Paul styles himself and Timothy "servants of Jesus Christ," in Phil. i. 1, he here declares himself to be an "apostle," and acknowledges Timothy as "our brother," not as a fellow-apostle. There was a peculiar propriety in associating Timothy with himself in this epistle, as he is supposed to have been a native of Phrygia, had travelled there with Paul, and was well known to the brethren.

2. *To the saints, &c.* See note on Acts ix. 13; Rom. xv. 26. ¶ *Grace be unto you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

3. *We give thanks to God, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. i. 4; Eph. i. 15, 16.

4. *Since we heard, &c.* That is, by Epaphras, ver. 7, 8. A similar form of speech occurs Eph. i. 15, in regard to a church confessedly established by Paul; hence its use here does not prove that he did not establish the church at Colosse.

5, 6. *For the hope.* Hope is here put for the object of hope, namely, "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. ¶ *Whereof ye heard before.* That is, when the gospel was preached to them. ¶ *As it is in all the world.* "In this clause the word *κοσμος*, translated *world*, signifies the Roman Empire, a sense which it has in other passages, particularly Luke ii. 1.—At the time the epistle to the Colossians was written, A. D. 61, the gospel had been preached and received in most of the countries within the Roman Empire,

and had produced a great change in the manners of those who received it." — *Macknight*. The general idea embraced in these two verses has been briefly paraphrased thus: "You have now attained that heavenly hope in the gospel, which has wrought in you, as it hath in others who have embraced it, the fruits of righteousness." — *Gilpin*.

7. *Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant.* "Epaphras is the same name with Epaphroditus; but this can scarcely be the same person with that Epaphroditus who brought the contributions from Philippi to Rome about this time. This was a native of Colosse (see iv. 12), the other was settled at Philippi, and held office in the Philippian church." — *Conybeare*. Epaphras was now at Rome with Paul, ch. iv. 12, 13, and had apparently been sent by the Colossians, to assure the apostle of their love, ver. 8, and their steadfastness in the faith, ver. 4, and perhaps to ask his advice and direction in regard to their affairs.

8. *Your love in the Spirit.* Not the ordinary love or affection between them, but an affection growing out of identity of faith and hope; or, perhaps rather, an affection prompted by faith in the brotherhood of all men as the children of one Father. "Your spiritual love, or your love which cometh from the Spirit." — *Assemb. Annot.*

9. *Do not cease to pray for you.* In ver. 3, the apostle declares that he gave thanks and prayed always for his brethren; he here mentions a particular supplication which he made on their behalf, *without ceasing*, that is,



since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all

might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have re-

---

habitually. See note on Rom. i. 9. ¶ *Filled with the knowledge, &c.* That they might "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. iii. 18.

10. *Walk worthy of the Lord, &c.* Conduct like true disciples of the Lord, by cherishing his spirit and obeying his precepts.

11. *Strengthened with all might, &c.* Paul relied on a higher strength than his own to enable him successfully to perform the labors and to bear the burdens assigned to him. See Phil. iv. 13. He prayed that his brethren at Colosse might be sustained by the same strength.

12. *Giving thanks unto the Father.* "Our special thanks are due to the 'Father,' in this, as he is represented as the great author of the whole plan of salvation,—as he who sent his Son to redeem us."—*Barnes.* ¶ *Partakers of the inheritance.* Believers enjoy rich blessings in the present life; but richer blessings are reserved for the children of God in the future life. Rom. xiv. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 9. And these blessings are represented as an inheritance. See note on Rom. viii. 17. ¶ *Saints in light.* Equivalent to "children of light." Eph. v. 8. "Christ, the author of the gospel, is 'the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' John i. 9. Hence the gospel, as coming from him, is termed *the true light*, 1 John ii. 8; whereas heathenish idolatry is called *darkness*, Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Besides, it was as proper to call men living under the gospel dispensation *saints in light*, as

in the following verse to call idolaters *men under the power of darkness*. In other passages also the word *light* signifies the gospel dispensation: 'now are ye light in the Lord,' Eph. v. 8; 'all ye are sons of the light,' 1 Thess. v. 5; 'light of the glorious gospel,' 2 Cor. iv. 4.—In this thanksgiving, the apostle insinuated to the Colossians, that their sharing in the blessings which belonged to the Jews was a strong motive to induce them to bear their afflictions with patience and joy."—*Macknight.* The earliest disciples of Christ were Jews; but the Gentiles were made joint-heirs with them to the inheritance of spiritual blessings in the kingdom of light.

13. *Who hath delivered us, &c.* See notes on Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Here, as elsewhere, the Father is represented as the bestower of the gift, through the ministry of his Son. ¶ *Translated us.* "Transferred us."—*Haweis.* "Transplanted us."—*Conybeare.* The idea is similar to that which is expressed in the assurance of our Lord, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." John v. 24. Believers enjoy a present salvation, a foretaste of endless blessedness. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

14. *Redemption through his blood.* See note on Rom. iii. 24. ¶ *Forgiveness of sins.* Not the remission of just punishment, but purification from the evil which deserves punishment. See notes on Matt. vi. 14, 15; Rom. iii. 25.

demption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible

and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist:

15. *Image of the invisible God.* See Heb. i. 3. The Son so clearly exhibited the Father's love to the human family, and in all his words and actions so strictly conformed to the will and purposes of the Father, that he was justified in saying, "I and my Father are one," and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John x. 30; xiv. 9. ¶ *The first-born of every creature.* The first in dignity and power, as in Ps. lxxxix. 27. "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." The word *πρωτότοκος*, first-born, indicates the first in the order of time; but this is not its only meaning; "it is used to denote one who is chief, or who is highly distinguished and pre-eminent. Thus it is employed in Rom. viii. 29, 'That he might be the first-born among many brethren.' So, in ver. 18 of this chapter, it is said that he was the 'first-born from the dead;' not that he was literally the first that was raised from the dead, which was not the fact, but that he might be pre-eminent among those that are raised. Comp. Ex. iv. 22. The meaning, then, is that Christ sustains the most exalted rank in the universe; he is pre-eminent above all others; he is at the head of all things"—*Barnes*. The only exception to the absolute supremacy of his rank is stated by the apostle thus: "When he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him." 1 Cor. xv. 27.

16. *For by him were all things created, &c.* "That the apostle does not here intend the creation of natural substances is evident; for (1,) he does not say that by him were created heaven and earth, but things in heaven, and things on earth; (2,) he

does not in descending into detail, specify things themselves, viz., celestial and terrestrial substances, but merely states of things, viz., thrones, dominions, etc., which are only ranks and orders of beings in the rational and moral world:—(4,) the creation of natural objects, the heaven, the earth, and sea, and all things therein, when they are plainly and unequivocally mentioned, is uniformly and invariably ascribed to the Father, both in the Old Testament and the New. Hence it follows, that the *creation*, which the apostle here ascribes to Christ, expresses that great change which was introduced into the moral world, and particularly into the relative situation of Jews and Gentiles, by the dispensation of the gospel. This is often called creation, or the new creation, and is usually ascribed to Jesus Christ, who was the great prophet and messenger of the new covenant. See Eph. i. 10; ii. 10-15; iii. 9; iv. 24; Col. iii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 17.—See Mr. Lindsey's *Sequel*, p. 477, and Wetstein in loc."—*Imp. Vers. Note*.

17. *He is before all things.* The word *πρὸ*, *before*, as used in the New Testament, generally denotes priority in time; and such is probably its meaning here, as in John xvii. 5, 24. Sometimes, as in Matt. xi. 10, it denotes precedence in position; and sometimes, pre-eminence in importance, as in Jas. v. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 8. Some thus understand it in this place, and regard it as indicative simply of Christ's "pre-eminence in all things," like "first-born of every creature," ver. 15, and "first-born from the dead," ver. 18. Doubtless the whole passage, ver. 15-19, is descriptive of such pre-eminence. Yet

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

19 For it pleased *the Father*

that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him *I say,*

it is not unlikely that priority of existence is mentioned as one of the proofs of the fact,—limited, however, like 1 Cor. xv. 27.

18. *And he is the head, &c.* The ruler, or governor. See note on 1 Cor. xi. 3. ¶ *The beginning.* The chief in authority. The word ἀρχή is susceptible of this meaning. See note on Eph. vi. 12. Or it may be understood in the sense of *founder*, or *originator*, as in this translation: "He is the head of the body, the church; whereof he is the beginning, as first-born from the dead."—*Conybeare*. So also *Whitby*, *Macknight*, and others. ¶ *The first-born from the dead.* "At the head of those who rise from their graves. This does not mean literally that he was the first who rose from the dead, for he himself raised up Lazarus and others, and the bodies of saints arose at his crucifixion; but it means that he had the pre-eminence among them all; he was the most illustrious of those who will be raised from the dead, and is head over them all."—*Barnes*. "He is also the first-born from the dead; as being Lord over the dead; since for this cause he died, and rose again, that he might be Lord over the dead and over the living, Rom. xiv. 9, and so might be pre-eminent in all things."—*Whitby*. See note on Heb. i. 6, and note on the Resurrection, at the end of 1 Cor. ch. xvi. ¶ *That in all things he might have the pre-eminence.* That he might be first in rank and authority. He was the image of God, commissioned to exhibit the divine perfections, speaking as never man spoke, John vii. 46, and performing miracles which none could perform without divine assistance. John iii. 2. He was placed at the head of the created universe, ver. 15, and em-

powered to establish new forms of government in the moral world, ver. 16. He was the founder and is the governor of the Christian church, having been demonstrated to be the "Son of God," and most exalted in dignity, "by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4. The apostle "in this verse speaks of his greatness as the founder and head of the church, and as the ruler of the dead; and tells us that these honors were bestowed on him, that in all respects he might be the chief person next to God."—*Macknight*.

19. *In him should all fulness dwell.* He should be fully qualified for the work committed to him. A similar idea is even more strongly expressed in ch. ii. 9. He had all the wisdom and power necessary to enable him to perform that great work of turning men from darkness to light, ver. 13, redeeming them from iniquity, securing the forgiveness of their sins, ver. 14, and reconciling all things unto himself, ver. 20. "There is nothing necessary to be done in our salvation which he is not qualified to do; there is nothing which we need, to enable us to perform our duties, to meet temptation, and to bear trial, which he is not able to impart. We may go to him in all our troubles, weaknesses, temptations, and wants, and may be supplied from his fulness, just as, if we were thirsty, we might go to an ocean of pure water and drink."—*Barnes*.

20. *And having made peace, &c.* There may be a reference here to the destruction of enmity between Jews and Gentiles. There is also a reference to the reconciliation to God of men who had long been estranged. See notes on 2 Cor. v. 18–21. The reconciliation is universal in extent, answering to the *gathering* described in Eph. i. 10. "This statement of the

whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled,

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and un-reproveable in his sight:

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be*

infinite extent of the results of Christ's redemption (which may well fill us with reverential awe) has been a sore stumbling-block to many commentators, who have devised various (and some very ingenious) modes of explaining it away. Into these, this is not the place to enter. It is sufficient to observe that St. Paul is still led to set forth the true greatness of Christ in opposition to the angelolatry of the Colossian heretics," &c.—*Conybeare*.

21. *Sometime alienated*, &c. The moral condition of Gentiles, before conversion, is described in Rom. ch. i. Such had heretofore been the condition of the Colossians; but they had now become reconciled to God, ver. 20, and had entered into the present enjoyment of the blessings communicated through the gospel.

22. *In the body of his flesh through death*. Equivalent to "the blood of his cross," ver. 20. See notes on Matt. xxvi. 28; Eph. ii. 13. ¶ *Holy*. Free from sin. This state cannot be fully attained on earth; but it may be approximated here, and made perfect in heaven. ¶ *Unblameable*. "Without blemish."—*Conybeare*. The original word is so translated, Eph. v. 27; 1 Pet. i. 19; "without spot," Heb. ix. 14; "without blame," Eph. i. 4; faultless," Jude 24; "without fault," Rev. xiv. 5; and it does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. ¶ *Unreproveable*. There will be none to reprove or condemn those whom God has justified. See notes on Rom. viii. 33, 34.

23. *If ye continue*, &c. The blessings of the gospel enjoyed through

not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

faith in the present life are forfeited by unbelief. See note on Rom. xi. 20. The blessings which God hath reserved for the future life rest on a more secure basis. Present belief or unbelief will not affect the veracity or the faithfulness of God. See notes on Rom. iii. 3, 4. ¶ *Was preached to every creature which is under heaven*. See note on ver. 6. ¶ *Am made a minister*. See note on 2 Cor. iii. 6.

24. *Who now rejoice*, &c. As the Twelve rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ, Acts v. 41, so Paul rejoiced in the sufferings which he endured in consequence of preaching the gospel of Christ to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews. See notes on Acts xx. 24; xxi. 13; Rom. v. 3. ¶ *Fill up that which is behind*, &c. "The phrase 'afflictions of Christ,' in this passage, being the genitive of the agent, signifies not the afflictions which Christ suffered, but the afflictions which he appointed the apostle to suffer for building the church. Wherefore the Colossians were not to think the worse of his doctrine concerning their salvation, because of his imprisonment. This text hath been appealed to by Papists, to prove that the good works of the saints are so meritorious as to procure pardon even for others. But it is to be observed, that, although the apostle saith that he suffered afflictions for the church, he does not say it was for procuring pardon for the church. His sufferings were beneficial to all mankind, as well as to the church, not as procuring pardon for them, but as a proof of his sincerity in teaching the

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

26 *Even the mystery which*

salvation of the Gentiles through faith, without obedience to the law of Moses: nay, as a proof of his firm conviction of the Christian doctrine in general, whereby the faith of believers in every age is greatly strengthened."—*Mac-knight*.

25-27. This passage has been paraphrased thus: "My commission indeed reaches chiefly to you, the Gentile part of that church, to whom I open the redemption of the world by Christ, — a mystery hitherto kept secret from mankind; but now revealed to all, both Jews and Gentiles; to whom God is pleased to make known his gracious intention of offering salvation to all, through Jesus Christ."—*Gilpin*.

25. *Dispensation of God*. According to the scheme which God had devised for bringing the Gentiles to the knowledge of the truth. See note on Eph. iii. 2. ¶ *To fulfil the word of God*. Or, "fully to preach the word of God," as in the margin. Paul considered it to be his duty as a Christian apostle, to keep nothing back which was profitable to his hearers, but to declare all the counsel of God. Acts xx. 20, 27. Hence he approached Gentiles as well as Jews, Greeks and Barbarians, the wise and the unwise, "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Rom. i. 13, 14; xv. 29.

26. *Even the mystery*. For the meaning of this word, see note on Rom. xi. 25. This particular mystery has been styled, "the Christian mystery of universal salvation."—*Conybeare*. "My commission, indeed, reaches chiefly to you, the Gentile part of that church, to whom I open the redemption of the world by Christ, a mystery hitherto kept secret from mankind, but now revealed to all, both Jews and Gentiles."—*Gilpin*. "The great doctrine that salvation was to be proclaimed to all mankind, Paul says, had

hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery

been concealed for many generations. Hence it was called a mystery, or a hidden truth. It was communicated especially to the apostles who were appointed to proclaim it, and through them to all the saints. Paul says that he regarded himself as specially called to make this truth known, as far as possible, to mankind."—*Barnes*. It is proper to say that neither Conybeare, nor Gilpin, nor Barnes, is understood to have believed that the grace of God will secure the salvation of all men; but they could not be blind to the fact that salvation was provided for all and freely offered to all. We may safely confide in God that the plan which he devised, "according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself," to gather all in Christ, and to save all, will be fully accomplished.

27. *To whom God would make known, &c.* "To whom God is pleased to make known his gracious intention of offering salvation to all, through Jesus Christ."—*Gilpin*. ¶ *Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory*. Or, among you," as in the margin. "The meaning is, that the whole of that truth, so full of glory, and so rich and elevated in its effect, is summed up in this,—that Christ is revealed among you as the source of the hope of glory in a better world. This was the great truth which so animated the heart and fired the zeal of the apostle Paul. The wonderful announcement had burst on his mind like a flood of day, that the offer of salvation was not to be confined, as he had once supposed, to the Jewish people, but that all men were now placed on a level; that they had a common Saviour; that the same heaven was now opened for all; and that there were none so degraded and vile that they might not have the offer of life as well as others. This great truth Paul burned to communicate to the

among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his work-

whole world; and for holding it, and in making it known, he had involved himself in all the difficulties which he had with his own countrymen; had suffered from want, and peril, and toil; and had finally been made a captive, and was expecting to be put to death. It was just such a truth as was fitted to fire such a mind as that of Paul, and to make it known was worth all the sacrifices and toils which he endured. Life is well sacrificed in making known such a doctrine to the world."—*Barnes*.

28. *Whom we preach, warning every man, &c.* "The original word signifies to admonish, rather than to warn against danger, and is so translated, Rom. xv. 14; Col. iii. 16; 1 Thess. v. 12; 2 Thess. iii. 15. The thrice repeated 'every man' has a manifest polemical character as a defence of the universality of Paul's doctrine against the Jewish one-sidedness of the Colossian false teachers."—*Olshausen*. ¶ *Teaching every man*. Paul labored to instruct the minds as well as to excite the emotions of disciples; for he, like Peter, desired not only that they should rejoice in hope of glory, but that they should be ready to give a satisfactory answer to every man who asked for a reason of the hope which they cherished. 1 Pet. iii. 15. ¶ *Present every man perfect, &c.* Comparatively perfect. Absolute perfection is not attainable on earth. Even Paul fell short of it, Rom. vii. 14-25; and it is not probable that he expected his disciples would fully attain it.

29. *Whereunto I also labored, &c.* Paul "was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles" in his labors for the conversion of mankind from dark-

ing, which worketh in me mightily.

## CHAPTER II.

FOR I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

ness to light, and from sin to holiness. See note on 2 Cor. xi. 5. ¶ *According to his working, &c.* He did not boast, but humbly ascribed the performance and the success of his labors to a higher power. See note on 1 Cor. xv. 10.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *Great conflict*. Alluding to the *striving or agonizing*, mentioned in ch. i. 29. ¶ *Laodicea*. "There are several cities of this name, but Scripture speaks only of that on the confines of Phrygia and Lydia. Its ancient name was Diospolis, then Rhoas, and lastly Laodicea. It was situated on the river Lycus, not far above its junction with the Meander; and was the metropolis of Phrygia Pacatiana. Whether the church here were numerous, we know not; but from the epistle in the Revelations (iii. 14-22), addressed to its minister, it should seem to have fallen into a lukewarm state," &c.—*Calmet*. From this description, it will be perceived that Laodicea was near Colosse; and similar dangers, and perils, and persecutions would naturally befall the brethren in both cities. Hence the apostle commends his epistle to the Colossians to the attention of the Laodiceans, also, ch. iv. 16. ¶ *As many as have not seen my face in the flesh*. From these words, in connection with the foregoing reference to the Colossians and "them at Laodicea," very many commentators suppose that Paul had never visited those cities, but that churches were planted there by others. On the other hand, it has been well suggested that as "Paul

2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

more than once passed through Phrygia, the presumption is that he would visit the chief cities of that province in passing and repassing through it. It is to be remembered that, according to ch. ii. 1, Colosse and Laodicea are placed on the same footing; and hence the difficulty of the supposition that he did not visit the former is increased. Can it be supposed that Paul would go again and again through that region, preaching the gospel in the points where it would be likely to exert the widest influence, and yet never visit either of these principal cities of the province, especially when it is remembered that Laodicea was the capital? — *Barnes*. The same writer suggests that, in this place, the apostle "may refer (1,) to some churches in the neighborhood formed since he was there; or (2,) to strangers who had come in there since he was with them; or (3,) to those who had been converted since he was there, and with whom he had no personal acquaintance. For all these he would feel the same solicitude, for they were all exposed to the same danger." But see the first note on ch. i.

2. *That their hearts might be comforted, &c.* Like other early Christians, they were exposed to many trials and persecutions, and needed consolation. ¶ *Knit together in love.* United in Christian sympathy and affection. ¶ *Unto all riches, &c.* A clear understanding of the gospel, long hidden but now revealed, and a firm faith in its gracious promises, constituted a rich inheritance to the Christian. Such "riches" the apostle labored to communicate to his brethren. ¶ *Mystery of God.* See note on ch. i. 27.

3. *In whom are hid, &c.* Or, "wherein," as in the margin. There is a great

3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in

variety in the Mss. some of which omit the last clause of ver. 2. If that clause be properly omitted, the meaning here is that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in the "mystery of God," ver. 2; that is, were hid until what was formerly concealed was made known, or the mystery was revealed. But if the concluding clause of ver. 2 be genuine, then the meaning here appears to be that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ, who "was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John i. 9. See, also, Luke x. 22; John xviii. 37. Jesus Christ was the chosen messenger of the Father, to communicate the glad tidings of the gospel to mankind; and the apostle styles him "the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. xii. 2. He is the medium through whom the truths of the gospel were revealed.

4. *Lest any man should beguile you, &c.* The unconverted Jews and Gentiles united in efforts to turn the disciples away from the faith of the gospel. The Judaizing Christians also endeavored to persuade the Gentile converts that conformity to the ritual law was indispensable to salvation. Acts xv. i. ¶ *With enticing words.* See note on ver. 8. To guard his brethren against such wiles of the adversary, the apostle assures them that plain, unadulterated truth is to be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ; that this truth is a rich treasure; and that all efforts to entice them away from this overflowing fountain should be steadfastly resisted.

5. *I am with you in the spirit.* I sympathize with you as if I were actually present. ¶ *Joying and beholding, &c.* Rejoicing in your orderly conduct and firmness of faith, as if I personally witnessed both.

the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him :

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as

ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the

6. *As ye have therefore received, &c.* As ye have acknowledged Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah, the Son of God, let your lives be in conformity with his precepts. To walk, as used here, signifies to conduct. The idea is similar to that expressed in Eph. v. 8.

7. *Rooted.* A figurative expression. Trees resist the force of winds, because their roots strike deeply into the ground. So Christians should become acquainted with the principles which lie at the very foundation of the gospel, that they may not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine." Eph. iv. 14.

8. *Beware lest any man spoil you.* Spoil here signifies to rob, to plunder, to despoil. "Beware that no man make prey of you."—*Haweis.* "Beware, lest there be any man who leads you away captive. Literally, 'who drags you away as his spoil.' The peculiar form of expression employed shows that St. Paul alluded to some particular individual at Colosse, who professed to teach a 'Philosophy.'"—*Conybeare.* ¶ *Philosophy and vain deceit.* Or, deceitful philosophy. "Take care that nobody plunder you, rob you, cheat you of all that you have, your principles of Christian knowledge, by that vain, empty, frothy, pretended knowledge and wisdom which the Gnostics talk of, 1 Tim. i. 4 and vi. 20, taken out of the heathenish Pythagorean Philosophy, together with the observances of the Mosaic Law, and very distant and contrary to Christian divinity."—*Hammond.* The disciples at Colosse, like most of the early Gentile converts, were exposed to a double danger: on the one hand were the Grecian philosophers, artfully persuading them to renounce Christianity, which they

represented as "foolishness;" see 1 Cor. ch. i., ii.; on the other hand, the Judaizing Christians insisted that they must conform to the law of Moses, or they could not be saved. Acts xv. 1. And thus in all ages of the church, a vain philosophy, or "science falsely so called," 1 Tim. vi. 20, has been represented by some as more worthy than the gospel to be embraced by men of intelligence and culture; while others have insisted that numberless forms and ceremonies and conditions must be observed, on penalty of endless damnation. Against such assaults upon their faith, the apostle exhorted his brethren to beware; assuring them that the "enticing words" with which their adversaries endeavored to despoil them of their faith and hope in the gospel, were "after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The same exhortation should be heeded in the present age, and for a like reason.

9. *All the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* See note on ch. i. 19. A similar phrase occurs in John iii. 34. The prominent idea is, that the Father fully qualified the Son to perform the work committed to his charge. Whatever was necessary, of power, or wisdom, or love, or the spirit of grace,—all was bestowed "without measure." Such an abundant supply of all the divine perfections was communicated to the Son, that he was truly "the brightness of" the Father's "glory and the express image of his person." Heb. i. 3. "The word πληρωμα, *fulness*, is here used by St. Paul in a technical sense, with a manifest allusion to the errors against which he is writing. The early Gnostics used the same word to represent the assemblage of emanations (conceived as angelic powers)



fulness of the Godhead bodily:

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

proceeding from the Deity. St. Paul therefore appears to say that the true 'fulness of the universe' (or, as he calls it, ch. ii. 9, 'fulness of the God-head'), is to be found, not in any angelic hierarchy, but in Christ alone." — *Conybeare, Note on ch. i. 19.* In Christ alone had God manifested his perfections as the Friend and Saviour of mankind.

10. *And ye are complete in him.* "Full in him." — *Tyndale.* "With him abides, as his body, all that is divinely perfect; and ye are made perfect through him, who is the head of all rule and authority." — *Norton.* "In him you have your fulness. That is, by union with him alone you can partake of the plenitude of the God-head, and not (as the Gnostics taught) by initiation into an esoteric system of theosophy, whereby men might attain to closer connection with some of the 'principalities and powers' of the angelic hierarchy." — *Conybeare.* The words πλήρωμα, *fulness*, in ver. 9, and πεπληρωμένοι, *complete*, in ver. 10, are but different forms from the same root, and are of similar signification. And as Christ derived his fulness from the Father, so also, though in less degree, his disciples derive fulness from him. ¶ *Which is the head*, &c. See notes on Eph. i. 21, 22.

11. *In whom.* As the disciples of whom; or through the influence of his spirit. ¶ *Circumcision made without hands.* "That made in the heart by the renunciation of all sin. The Jewish teachers insisted on the necessity of the literal circumcision in order to salvation (comp. Eph. ii. 11); and hence this subject is so often introduced

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting

into the writings of Paul, and he is at so much pains to show that, by believing in Christ, all was obtained which was required in order to salvation. Circumcision was an ordinance by which it was denoted that all sin was to be cut off or renounced, and that he who was circumcised was to be devoted to God and to a holy life. All this, the apostle says, was attained by the gospel; and, consequently, they had all that was denoted by the ancient rite of circumcision. What Christians had obtained, moreover, related to the heart; it was not a mere ordinance pertaining to the flesh." — *Barnes.* ¶ *In putting off the body of the sins.* This describes the character of "circumcision without hands," like baptism. 1 Pet. iii. 21. ¶ *Circumcision of Christ.* The spiritual circumcision recognized by the gospel of Christ as effectual.

12. *Buried with him in baptism*, &c. See note on Rom. vi. 4.

13. *And you being dead*, &c. See note on Eph. ii. 1.

14. *Blotting out the handwriting*, &c. Namely, the ritual law of Moses, or the law of rites and ordinances, which had hitherto been binding on the Jews, and which the Jews sought to impose on the Gentiles. See note on Rom. x. 4. ¶ *Against us*, — *contrary to us.* See note on Acts xv. 10. ¶ *Nailing it to his cross.* It is said that, in the early ages, contracts were sometimes cancelled by driving nails through them. One effect of our Lord's ministry, and death, and resurrection, was the breaking down of the partition wall between the Jews and the Gentiles, or the abrogation of that ritual law which had

ing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

16 Let no man therefore

for ages constituted a barrier between them. If, as most commentators suppose, the apostle alluded to that ancient form of cancelling bonds, "then the expression here denotes that the obligation of the Jewish institutions ceased on the death of Jesus, *as if* he had taken them and nailed them to his own cross, in the manner in which a bond was cancelled."—*Barnes*.

15. *And having spoiled principalities.* &c. "Spoiled rule and power."—

*Tyndale*. Conquered, overpowered, and triumphed over both temporal and spiritual rulers. See note on Eph. vi.

12. The word here translated *spoil* is not the same which occurs in ver. 8; it "signifies to strip off one's arms or clothes fully; and because victors anciently stripped the vanquished of their arms, it signifies *to spoil* in general."—*Macknight*. "The terms used in this verse are all military, and the idea is, that Christ hath completely subdued our enemies by his death."—

*Barnes*. From what follows, however, in ver. 16, it would seem that special reference is made to the Jewish law, and to those who endeavored to bring the Gentiles under bondage to it. So urgently did the Judaizing teachers insist on conformity to the ritual law, that Paul devoted much time and labor to counteract their baneful influence upon the Gentiles. See note on ver. 11. Indeed, his contest with these false teachers was quite as earnest and persistent, as that which he waged against the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

16, 17. *Let no man therefore judge you, &c.* Let no Judaizer arraign or condemn you. See note on Rom. xiv. 3. ¶ *In meat or in drink.* Or, "For eating and drinking," as in the margin. ¶ *Or in respect of a holyday,*

judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary

&c. "The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the 'handwriting of ordinances,' which had been taken away, namely, the distinction of meats and drinks, what was clean and what unclean, according to the law; and the necessity of observing certain holidays or festivals, such as the new moons and particular Sabbaths, or those which should be observed with more than ordinary solemnity; all these had been taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross, and were no longer of moral obligation."—*Clarke*. "The word *sabbath* in the Old Testament is applied not only to the seventh day, but to all the days of holy rest that were observed by the Hebrews, and particularly the beginning and close of their great festivals. There is, doubtless, reference to those days in this place, as the word is used in the plural number, and the apostle does not refer particularly to the Sabbath properly so called."—*Barnes*.

18. *Let no man beguile you, &c.* "Our apostle, having warned the Colossians against the errors of the Judaizing teachers, comes next to warn them against the practice of the Paganizing Christians, who were directed by their guides to worship the angels, covering their error with a plausible show of humility, pretending it was presumptuous to go to God immediately without the mediation of those excellent creatures; but this the apostle tells them was a bold intruding into things they knew nothing of, God having neither revealed nor taught any such thing, and argued that they were vainly puffed up with the foolish imaginations of their own fleshly mind."—*Poole*.

19. *And not holding the Head, &c.*

humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

### CHAPTER III.

**I**F ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

The intimate connection between Christ as the head, and mankind as the body or members, is here mentioned, to show the absurdity of attempting to approach God through any other channel. Christ represents the Father, being filled with his fulness, and is united with mankind as the head with the body, and is therefore the only proper "mediator between God and men." 1 Tim. ii. 5. Hence, those who recommend any other method of access to the Father, whether by "worshipping of angels," or otherwise, forsake the true and living Head. See note on Eph. iv. 16.

20. *Wherefore if ye be dead, &c.* See notes on Rom. vi. 2-6. ¶ *Why, as though living, &c.* Why do you allow the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law to have any binding effect on you? If you are dead to the law, you should be entirely free from its influence. See note on Rom. vii. 4.

21-23. *Touch not, &c.* "Wherefore if ye, by your profession, be dead with Christ, from the rudiments of the world, which he hath nailed to his cross, and took out of the way, ver. 14, why, as though living yet in conformity to the world, are ye subject to the ordinances and decrees of men? Such as these are, *touch not* what is offered to an idol, or *touch not* a woman, 1 Cor. vii. 1; *taste not* forbidden

meats, *handle not* an unclean thing; which are all to perish with the using, or tend to corruption by the using or abusing them, after the doctrines and commandments of men." — *Whitby*. "Particularly the following, neither eat, nor taste, nor handle, whatever things tend to the destruction of life; for these ordinances are delivered to you according to the commandments and doctrines of men. Which commandments and doctrines of the Platonists, concerning the worship of angels, and of the Pythagoreans, concerning abstinence from animal food, have an appearance indeed of wisdom; the former, by its being a worship voluntarily performed and a supposed exercise of humility; and the latter, by its being thought a mortifying of the body, useful for subjecting its appetites to the soul. But the wisdom of the Pythagorean precepts does not appear by any proper provision which they make for satisfying of the body." — *Macknight*. "If, then, when you died with Christ you put away the childish lessons of outward things, why, as though you still lived in outward things, do you submit yourselves to decrees (hold not, taste not, touch not, — forbidding the use of things which are all made to be consumed in the using) founded on the precepts and doctrines of men?" — *Conybeare*.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, *who is our life*, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concu-

piscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

### CHAPTER III.

1. *Risen with Christ.* See notes on Rom. vi. 2, 4. ¶ *Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* See notes on Rom. viii. 34; Phil. ii. 9-11.

2. *Set your affection, &c.* Or, *mind*, as in the margin. Regard heavenly blessings more highly than earthly enjoyments. See note on 2 Cor. iv. 18.

3. *For ye are dead.* See notes on Rom. vi. 2, 4. ¶ *Your life is hid, &c.* "The language here is taken probably from *treasure* which is *hid* or concealed in a place of security; and the idea is, that eternal life is an invaluable jewel or treasure, which is laid up with Christ in heaven where God is. There it is safely deposited. It has this security, that it is with the Redeemer, and that he is in the presence of God; and thus nothing can reach it or take it away." — *Barnes*.

4. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, &c.* The word *φανερώω*, *appear*, occurs frequently in the New Testament, and is very generally translated *manifest*, or *make manifest*. It is not unusual in the Scriptures to style any extraordinary manifestation of divine power an *appearing* or a *coming* of God, or Christ. See note on Matt. xvi. 27, 28. To each individual, Christ comes, or manifests himself in a peculiar manner, when he passes from the present to the future life. To this coming he refers, John xiv. 3: "I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." And to the same coming I understand him to refer in this place.

¶ *Then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* Ye shall be made like him. Thus it is written that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," 1 Cor. xv. 49; that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," Phil. iii. 21; that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 2. See also Luke xx. 36; Rom. viii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 42-44. Both a physical and a moral change may be expected at "the manifestation of the sons of God." See note on Rom. viii. 19.

5. *Mortify therefore your members, &c.* Resist, restrain, conquer. See notes on Rom. vi. 13; viii. 13. ¶ *Inordinate affection.* Translated "vile affections," Rom. i. 26. ¶ *Covetousness, which is idolatry.* An inordinate desire to acquire and retain riches. Regarding earthly goods more highly than heavenly; valuing the gift more highly than the Giver; worshipping "the creature more than the Creator." Rom. i. 25.

6. *The wrath of God cometh, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 18.

7-8. *In the which ye also walked, &c.* Like other Gentiles, they had been gross sinners; but by the grace of God they had also been enabled to forsake their former evil practices. They had been dead in sin; but they had also been quickened to newness of life. For a similar description of the effect produced by conversion to Christianity, see 1 Cor. vi. 9-11.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,

bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in

9-10. *Lie not one to another.* See note on Eph. iv. 25. ¶ *Put off the old man, &c.* See note on Rom. vi. 6. ¶ *Renewed in knowledge after the image, &c.* See note on Rom. xii. 2.

11. *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, &c.* "The meaning here is, that all are on a level; that there is no distinction of nation in the church; that all are to be regarded and treated as brothers, and that, therefore, no one should be false to another, or lie to another."—*Barnes*. Under the reign of the gospel, two great principles of government are always recognized, namely, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of men. We are taught that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth," Acts xvii. 26; that he "commendeth his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8; that because he thus submitted himself to "the death of the cross, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father," Phil. ii. 8-11; and that "when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 28.

12. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, &c.* See note on Rom. viii. 33. A firm belief that they are children of one Father, partakers of the same love and grace, and heirs to the same heavenly inheritance, should induce Christians to be kind and affectionate to each other.

13. *Forbearing one another.* See note on Rom. xv. 1. ¶ *Forgiving one another, &c.* See notes on Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15.

14. *Above all these things.* Chiefly; as of the utmost importance. ¶ *Put on charity.* Love. See note on 1 Cor. xiii. 13. ¶ *Bond of perfectness.* "The bond of all perfection; the thing which will unite all other things, and make them complete. See the parallel place in Eph. iv. 3. The idea seems to be that love will bind all the other graces fast together, and render the whole system complete. Without love, though there might be other graces and virtues, there would be a want of harmony and compactness in our Christian graces, and this was necessary to unite and complete the whole."—*Barnes*.

15. *Let the peace of God.* See note on Rom. xv. 13. "And let Christian peace and union be the moderator and guide in all your actions, and do all that may tend to that end, it being the prime thing to which your Christianity obliges you, and your being fellow-members of Christ with all others; to which ye may also take in that obligation of gratitude to God, who hath been thus merciful to you, and solemnly

one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.

20 Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.

expects this return from you, to be to others as he hath been to you."—*Hammond*.

16. *In psalms and hymns, &c.* Singing was one of the forms of worship in the Jewish church, and was adopted by our Lord and his disciples as a devotional service. Matt. xxvi. 30. See note on 1 Cor. xiv. 26. "Calvin thinks all these words refer to David's poetical pieces. But I see not the authority of this interpretation, and think it much more reasonable to believe that by 'hymns and spiritual songs' he means such poetical compositions, as under the influence of the Spirit were written or uttered."—*Doddridge*. Of this class, Doddridge himself has furnished some notable examples. Christian hymns, sung in Christian tunes, furnish an important aid in exciting devout feeling; but what is styled opera music, with an indistinct enunciation of the words, while it may please the ear, does not, I apprehend, particularly sanctify the heart.

22 Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

#### CHAPTER IV.

**M**ASTERS, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

2 Continue in prayer, and

17. *Whatsoever ye do, &c.* "And whatsoever ye do, or speak, let it be with acknowledgment of the great mercies of Christ to you, that hath enabled you to do whatever it is; and for his mercy reached out in him, let God the Father have the honor and thanks."—*Hammond*.

18, 19. *Wives, submit, &c.* See notes on Eph. v. 21-30.

20, 21. *Children, obey, &c.* See notes on Eph. vi. 1-4.

22-25. *Servants, obey, &c.* See notes on Eph. vi. 5-8. ¶ *There is no respect of persons.* See notes on Rom. ii. 6. A just recompense will be rendered, without regard to social position or station in life.

#### CHAPTER IV.

1. *Masters, give unto your servants, &c.* See note on Eph. vi. 9.

2-4. *Continue in prayer, &c.* "Persevere in prayer."—*Conybeare*. Cultivate a prayerful spirit. Pray often, and pray in faith. See notes

watch in the same with thanksgiving;

3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

7 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is a be-*

loved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord:

8 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;

9 With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

on Rom. i. 9; xii. 12. ¶ *Withal praying also for us, &c.* "Praying also at the same time for us."—*Haweis*. "Pray at the same time also for us."—*Mac-knight*. Paul prayed continually for his brethren, Rom. i. 9; and he earnestly besought their prayers for him. 2 Cor. i. 11. ¶ *Door of utterance*. Freedom of speech. Opportunity to proclaim the gospel. See note on Eph. vi. 18, 19.

5. *Walk in wisdom, &c.* See notes on Eph. v. 15, 16.

6. *Seasoned with salt, &c.* "Salt, on account of its use in preserving men's food, and rendering it palatable, was anciently made the emblem of wisdom and virtue. In allusion to this, the apostle ordered the Colossians to season their speech with salt, that is, with wisdom and virtue, that it might be preserved from the rottenness condemned, Eph. iv. 29."—*Mac-knight*. "Free from insipidity. It would be well if religious speakers and writers had always kept this precept in mind."—*Conybeare*.

7, 8. *Tychicus*. See note on Eph. vi. 21, where the same person is mentioned. "Tychicus well knew the apostle's zeal and perseverance in preaching the gospel; his sufferings on that account; his success in converting both Jews and Gentiles; and the converts which were made in

Cæsar's household; he could give these to the Colossians in ample detail; and some of them it would not have been prudent to commit to writing."—*Clarke*.

9. *With Onesimus*. Supposed to be the same who is mentioned in the epistle to Philemon. ¶ *Who is one of you*. "Who is from you; that is, from your city. So I understand the phrase, because the common translation, 'who is one of you,' leads the reader to think Onesimus was a member of the church at Colosse before he left his master; whereas it is certain that he was converted after that period by the apostle at Rome."—*Mac-knight*.

10. *Aristarchus*. See note on Acts xxvii. 2. It would seem that he was in confinement with Paul, at Rome, though it does not appear that he was sent thither as a prisoner. ¶ *And Marcus*. See note on Acts xv. 37. Paul had formerly been dissatisfied with him on account of his supposed reluctance to encounter all the perils which beset the preacher of the gospel; but he had become reconciled, and he now speaks of him affectionately as a "fellow-worker," ver. 11. ¶ *Ye received commandments*. When or how this commandment was given does not appear. It is natural to suppose that Paul had personally instructed them.

11 And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only *are my* fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

12 Epaphras, who is *one of you*, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13 For I bear him record,

11. *And Jesus, which is called Justus.* Perhaps called Jesus by the Jews, and Justus by the Romans; the former being a Jewish and the latter a Roman name. Such double names were frequent. See note on Acts xiii. 9. ¶ *Who are of the circumcision.* Jews by birth. "They are of the Jewish nation, converts to Christ, and the only persons of that denomination who have sincerely labored with me in the gospel, and who have been a consolation to me. These faithful ministers of Christ, of the Jewish nation, acknowledge you as their brethren, though ye be uncircumcised Gentiles." — *Macknight.*

12. *Epaphras.* See note on ch. i. 7. ¶ *Who is one of you.* An inhabitant of Colosse, and probably a member of the church there.

13. *Laodicea.* See note on ch. ii. i. ¶ *Hierapolis.* "A city of Phrygia, not far from Colosse and Laodicea." — *Calmet.* It derived its name, which signifies "Holy City," from the numerous temples erected for the worship of heathen deities. Christianity seems to have been planted there to some extent; but the place is now "utterly forsaken and desolate."

14. *Luke, the beloved physician.* The writer of the gospel bearing his name, and also of the Acts of the Apostles. "Luke was deservedly beloved of the apostle Paul. He was not only an intelligent and sincere disciple of Christ, but the apostle's affectionate and faithful friend, as appears from his attending him in several of his journeys through the Lesser Asia and Greece.

that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

14 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

16 And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye like-

He likewise accompanied him when he carried the collections to the saints in Judea, where, during the apostle's two years' imprisonment at Jerusalem and Cæsarea he abode, and no doubt was present at his trials before Felix and Festus, and heard the speeches which he hath recorded in his history of the Acts. And when the apostle was sent a prisoner to Italy, Luke accompanied him in the voyage, and remained with him in Rome till he was released. Last of all, this excellent person was with the apostle during his second imprisonment in the same city; on which occasion, when his other assistants deserted him through fear, Luke abode with him and ministered to him. 2 Tim. iv. 11." — *Macknight.* ¶ *Demas.* Little is known of Demas, except that although he remained faithful up to this time, yet he so "loved this present world," that he forsook the apostle when he was enduring his second imprisonment at Rome. See 2 Tim. iv. 10, 16.

15. *Nymphas.* From the fact that there was a "church in his house" (see note on Rom. xvi. 5), Nymphas would seem to have been a prominent disciple, exercising considerable influence at Colosse; but he is not elsewhere named in the New Testament, and nothing more is known of him. The apostle's affectionate salutation alone has preserved his name from oblivion.

16. *Cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans.* Colosse and Laodicea were in such close proximity, that the two churches would naturally be exposed to similar



wise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.

17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

dangers and in need of similar advice and encouragement. ¶ *That ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.* It is generally supposed that Paul here refers to his Epistle to the Ephesians, of which he had probably directed that a copy should be sent to Laodicea.

17. *And say to Archippus, &c.* This disciple is styled "our fellow-soldier," in the Epistle to Philemon, supposed to have been sent with this epistle. It does not appear precisely what office he sustained; but it was some grade in the "ministry," and the apostle exhorts him to faithfulness. From the peculiar form of the exhortation to fulfil or complete his ministry, some have supposed he was drawing

18 The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome to the Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.

towards the close of life. See note on Acts xx. 24.

18. *The salutation by the hand of me Paul.* The apostle employed an amanuensis to write the body of his epistles, but uniformly added the parting salutation and benediction with his own hand. ¶ *Remember my bonds.* He has several times already referred to his bondage; but this final reference is peculiarly affecting, as his right hand, with which he wrote, was probably bound by a chain to the left arm of his keeper. See note on Acts xxviii. 16. ¶ *Grace be with you.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20.

Although the subscription is not regarded as authoritative, yet, from ver. 7-9, it seems to be undoubtedly correct.

# FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

## CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians, *which is* in God the Father, and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* unto

## CHAPTER I.

"Thessalonica is a city and seaport of the second part of Macedonia. It is situated at the head of the Sinus Thermaicus. When Æmilius Paulus, after his conquest of Macedonia, divided the country into four districts, this city was made the capital of the second division, and was the station of a Roman governor and questor. Liv. xlv. 29. It was anciently called Therma, but afterwards received the name of Thessalonica, either from Cassander, in honor of his wife Thessalonica, the daughter of Philip, or from Philip himself, in memory of a victory obtained over the armies of Thessaly. Diod. Sic. xix. 35 et 52; Coll. Strab. vii. p. 509. It was inhabited by Greeks, Romans, and Jews, from among whom Paul gathered a numerous church. Thessalonica, now called Saloniki, is at present a wretched town, but having a population of about sixty thousand persons."—*Robinson's Calmet*. When Paul visited this city, he found there "a synagogue of the Jews," and, "as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. — And some of them believed and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." Acts xvii. 1-4. It would seem, from ch. ii. 9, that the apostle must

you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

have remained in the city longer than three weeks, and still more from what he says in Phil. iv. 16. "For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." Here, however, as elsewhere, Paul encountered the violent opposition of the Jews. It is recorded that "the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company and set all the city on an uproar," so that "the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea." Acts xvii. 5, 10. During this visit, whatever may have been its precise length, the foundation of a Christian church was laid; to which church this epistle was subsequently addressed. It is generally supposed to have been written about A. D. 52, while Paul was at Corinth, and to have been also the earliest of all his epistles.

1. *Paul*. See note on Rom. i. 1. ¶ *And Silvanus*. Otherwise called Silas, a fellow-laborer with Paul. See note on 2 Cor. i. 19. ¶ *And Timotheus*. A favorite disciple of Paul, who labored faithfully with him. See notes on Acts xvi. 1-3; Rom. xvi. 21. For the reason why Paul associated others with himself in the salutation, see notes on 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1. ¶ *Grace be unto you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

2. *We give thanks to God always, &c.* See notes on Rom. i. 8, 9.

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers

of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering

3. *Remembering without ceasing, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 9. "The working of your faith, and the labors of your love, and the patient endurance of your hope."—*Conybeare*. "All these are plainly Hebraisms for active faith, laborious love, and patient hope, and might very properly have been so translated."—*Doddridge*.

4. *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.* Or, "beloved of God, your election," as in the margin. See note on Rom. ix. 11.

5. *Our gospel.* The gospel presented by Paul and his associates. See note on Rom. ii. 16. ¶ *In power and in the Holy Ghost, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. ii. 4. ¶ *In much assurance.* "That is, with firm conviction, or full persuasion of its truth. Many seem to embrace the gospel as if they only half believed it, or as if it were a matter of very doubtful truth and importance; but this was not the case with the Thessalonians. There was the firmest conviction of its truth, and they embraced it, heart and soul."—*Barnes*.

6. *Followers of us, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. iv. 16; xi. 1. ¶ *In much affliction.* Under the pressure of sharp opposition and persecution. See Acts xvii. 5-8. ¶ *With joy of the Holy Ghost.* A belief in the gospel, revealed by the gracious Spirit of God, produces joy in the heart of the believer, even though he suffer tribu-

lation on account of his faith. See notes on Acts v. 41; viii. 8; Rom. v. 3; xv. 13.

7. *In Macedonia and Achaia.* "The apostle mentions these parts as he had just been travelling through them before he came to Corinth, from whence he wrote this epistle. Compare Acts xvii. 14, 15; xviii."—*Doddridge*. For some account of these provinces, see notes on Acts xvi. 9; xviii. 12; Rom. xv. 26.

8. *For from you sounded out, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 8. The faith of the Thessalonians had been "spoken of" in other provinces; the fame of their conversion had been "spread abroad," and had attracted general notice. "From you first the word has made itself felt, as it were, with the sound of a trumpet, and your conversion was so remarkable that it attracted the eyes of men; the light shone upon all Macedonia and Achaia, and in all other places."—*Jowett*. ¶ *So that we need not to speak anything.* Namely, concerning the conversion and Christian character of the Thessalonians, because the facts were extensively known, already.

9. *For they themselves show, &c.* "Every man's mouth being full of it, how readily we were entertained by you, and how really and effectually ye were converted from heathenism to Christianity."—*Hammond*. So we read in Gal. iv. 8. "Howbeit then, when

in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods." In both these churches were many believing Jews, Acts xvii. 4; Gal. iv. 9; the larger part, however, were of Gentile origin. The historian says of the Jews, that "some of them believed;" but he describes the accession of the other element, as "of the devout Greeks a great multitude." Acts xvii. 4, 5. Hence, in general terms, the apostle might properly say, "Ye turned to God from idols," even though the Jewish section of the church had worshipped "the living and true God" before they heard and believed the gospel of God's grace.

10. *And to wait for his Son from heaven.* Our Lord assured his hearers, that during the lifetime of some of them he would make a visible demonstration of his power, equivalent to descending from heaven with an escort of angels, to administer justice to his friends and to his enemies. See Matt. xvi. 27. The early Christians looked forward to this "*coming*," with much anxiety, hoping then to be delivered from the power of their persecutors and oppressors. To this "*coming*" the apostle here refers. He speaks of it more fully in 2 Thess. i. 5-10.

¶ *Whom he raised from the dead.* See note on Rom. i. 4. ¶ *Which delivered us from the wrath to come.* For the meaning of *wrath*, generally, see note on Rom. i. 18. The reference here is specially to that manifestation of divine justice, styled "*wrath to come*" in Matt. iii. 7. Dr. Clarke had a glimpse of the apostle's meaning when he interpreted this *wrath to come* to mean in part, "the destruction which is about to come on the unbelieving and impenitent Jews." See Matt. xxiv. 15-34, and notes on 2 Thess. i. 5-10.

## CHAPTER II.

**F**OR yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye

## CHAPTER II.

1. *For yourselves, brethren, know,* &c. See note on ch. i. 9.

2. *But even after that we had suffered before.* The apostle's object in referring to his previous sufferings, in connection with his "entrance in" among the Thessalonians, was probably to convince them of his honesty of purpose, his sincere belief in the gospel, and his ardent desire that his fellow-men, both Jews and Gentiles, should hear, believe, and rejoice. It would seem, from what follows, that some of the false teachers accused the apostle of dishonesty and imposture. He effectually rebutted the charge by an appeal to what he had suffered in behalf of the gospel, and to his steadfastness in the midst of such trials. ¶ *Shamefully entreated.* He refers to a particular instance of ignominious treatment, as a sample of the whole. ¶ *As ye know.* The fact was of public notoriety. Philippi was so near Thessalonica, and the fact of such recent occurrence, that his brethren were presumed to have known it at the time when he first visited them. ¶ *At Philippi.* Where Paul was unlawfully scourged and imprisoned. Acts xvi. 12-40. ¶ *We were bold.* We were not disheartened by such violent persecution. ¶ *With much contention.* Paul encountered persecution at Thessalonica also; the Jews, as was their wont, "set all the city on an uproar," and Paul and Silas were obliged to escape from the city for the preservation of life. Acts xvii. 1-10.

3. *Our exhortation was not of deceit.* I did not attempt to lead you astray by tricks of oratory, or "with enticing words of man's wisdom." See note on

know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile :

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak ; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time

used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness ; God is witness :

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children :

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing

1 Cor. ii. 4. ¶ *Nor of uncleanness.* I taught no doctrine subversive of good morals. See note on 2 Cor. vii. 2. ¶ *Nor in guile.* I preached the gospel in all plainness, and made no attempt to secure your acceptance of it, or of me, by any deceptive art whatever.

4. *But as we were allowed of God,* &c. In all his epistles, Paul asserts that he was commissioned by divine, not human, authority, to be an apostle. His opposers denied that he had equal authority with the other apostles, because he was not a personal follower of our Lord, while on the earth. But he claimed to have been appointed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all power and authority. See notes on Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 12, 15, 16. ¶ *Not as pleasing men,* &c. See note on Gal. i. 10. ¶ *Which trieth our hearts.* See note on Rom. viii. 27. Men may be deceived by cunning and sleight of hand; but "God is not mocked." Gal. vi. 7. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

5. *Flattering words.* See note on 1 Cor. ii. 4. ¶ *Nor a cloak of covetousness.* This may be regarded as an implied rebuke of false teachers, who sought chiefly their own worldly gain, and also as a solemn disavowal of any such unworthy purpose on his own part. In proof of his assertion, he appeals to the fact, that, while he was preaching the gospel in Thessalonica, his own hands ministered to his necessities, ver. 9, as subsequently at Athens and at Ephesus. Acts xviii. 3;

xx. 34. ¶ *God is witness.* A solemn appeal to God. See note on Rom. i. 9.

6. *Nor of men sought we glory,* &c. Paul sought not the applause of men, at Thessalonica nor elsewhere. He labored "not as pleasing men, but God." Ver. 4. ¶ *We might have been burdensome,* &c. These words "have been referred in different senses, either to what precedes, or to what follows. In the first case the sense would be, although we might have been oppressive to you with our glorying and claims. But even though the words be thus humored in the translation, the antithesis is not quite sound. Without wholly losing sight of what has preceded, it is better to connect them with what follows. The apostle means to say that he might have oppressed them with apostolical claims and pretensions. He might have commanded where he entreated; he might have 'come to them with a rod,' and he came to them 'in love, and in the spirit of meekness;' 1 Cor. iv. 21; he might have claimed the right of support from them, as an apostle of Christ, and he waives it for their sake. Compare 1 Cor. ix."—Jowett.

7. *But we were gentle among you,* &c. Instead of exercising authority, we sought to win you by persuasion.

8. *Affectionately desirous of you.* Very strong affection is here indicated; an affection which rendered the apostle willing to sacrifice his life on behalf of his brethren. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John xv. 13. Yet our Lord manifested "greater

to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

love," for he laid down his life for his enemies; and Paul was ready to imitate the noble example. ¶ *But also our own souls.* We were willing not only to preach the gospel to you, but to sacrifice life itself also, if necessary, in the faithful execution of our ministry. See Acts xx. 24; xxi. 13. "Or rather *lives*, ψυχὰς. Matt. vi. 25; xx. 28; Luke xii. 22, 23; Mark iii. 4. This does not mean that the apostle was willing to be *damned*, or to lose his *soul*, in order to save them, but that if it had been necessary he would have been ready to lay down his life. See 1 John iii. 16. 'We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' His object seems to be to assure them that he did not leave them from any want of love to them, or from the fear of being put to death. It was done from the strong conviction of duty. He appears to have left them, because he could not longer remain without exposing others to danger, and without the certainty that there would be continued disturbances. See Acts xvii. 9, 10." — *Barnes*.

9. *Our labor and travail.* "Our labor and toil." — *Haweis*. "My toilsome labors. One of the grounds upon which St. Paul's Judaizing opponents denied his apostolic authority, was the fact that he (in general) refused to be maintained by his converts, whereas our Lord had given to his apostles the right of being so maintained. St. Paul fully explains his reasons for not availing himself of that right in several passages, especially 1 Cor. ix.; and he here takes care to allude to his possession of the right, while mentioning his renunciation of it." — *Cony-*

10 Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called

*beare*. Lest he should be "chargeable" to the brethren, or give occasion for the slightest suspicion that he was actuated by mercenary motives, Paul wrought with his hands, "laboring night and day" for the supply of his daily need. Acts xviii. 3; xx. 33, 34. See note on 1 Cor. ix. 18.

10. *Ye are witnesses*, &c. Although Paul did not claim to have attained perfection, or absolute freedom from sin, Rom. vii. 14-25, yet by the grace of God he had been able to encounter labor, and opposition, and violent persecution at Thessalonica, with such equanimity of temper and such propriety of conduct, that he could confidently appeal to the brethren that he was unblameable. The testimony of his own conscience justified also his appeal to God, the searcher of hearts. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." 1 John iii. 21.

11, 12. In these verses the apostle particularizes what he asserts, ver. 10, in general terms. ¶ *As a father.* There is some confusion of metaphor in this discourse. In ver. 7, the apostle compares his conduct with that of a *nurse*; here with that of a *father*. In both cases the idea is plain, that he had manifested an earnest desire for the welfare of his brethren. ¶ *Walk worthy of God.* Conduct in such a manner as to reflect honor on Him who hath granted you such high privileges. See note on Matt. v. 16. ¶ *Who hath called you*, &c. See notes on Rom. i. 6; viii. 30; 1 Cor. i. 9.

13. *Without ceasing.* See note on Rom. i. 9. ¶ *Not as the word of men.* Not as a mere human device; not as a

you unto his kingdom and glory.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became

system of doctrines devised and arranged by the intellect of men. ¶ *But, as it is in truth, the word of God.* "As the divine word; not the word which tells of God, but the word of which God is the author." — *Jowett*. A similar idea is expressed in Gal. i. 11, 12. Believing the gospel to be of divine authority, the disciples were prepared to suffer persecution in its behalf, without wavering. Such was the *effectual working* of the gospel in the Thessalonians. Persecution, which might have induced them to abandon any system of mere philosophy, did not shake their faith in what they verily believed to be a revelation from God. They were enduring such persecution when this epistle was written; and one of the objects of the writer was to encourage them to bear it with fortitude.

14. *Became followers of the churches, &c.* Like the churches in Judea, ye hold fast your faith in the revealed "word of God," notwithstanding like them also ye have been persecuted by "your own countrymen." At first sight, it might seem from the history in Acts xvii. 5-9, that the Christians suffered directly at the hands of the Jews; yet a closer inspection shows that "in almost all places the Jews went about to accomplish their purpose, by stirring up the Gentile inhabitants against their converted countrymen. Out of Judea they had not power to do much mischief in any other way. This was the case at Thessalonica in particular. 'The Jews, which believed not, moved with envy, set all the city on an uproar.' Acts

followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to

xvii. 5. It was the same a short time afterwards at Berea, Acts xvii. 13. And before this, our apostle had met with a like species of persecution, in his progress through the Lesser Asia; in every city 'the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil-affected against the brethren.' Acts xiv. 2. The epistle therefore represents the case accurately as the history states it. It was the Jews always who set on foot the persecutions against the apostles and their followers. He speaks truly, therefore, of them, when he says in this epistle, 'They both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us,' — forbidding us to speak unto the Gentiles.' Ver. 15, 16. But out of Judea it was at the hands of the Gentiles, it was 'of their own countrymen,' that the injuries they underwent were immediately sustained. 'Ye have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews.' — *Paley*.

15. *Who both killed the Lord Jesus, &c.* See note on Acts ii. 23. ¶ *And their own prophets.* See Matt. xxiii. 29-33; Acts vii. 52. ¶ *Persecuted us.* Or, *chased us out*, as in the margin. By their influence he had been driven from Iconium to Lystra, Acts xiv. 6, and had been stoned by them at Lystra and drawn out of the city, being supposed to be dead. Acts xiv. 19. He had been "chased out" of Thessalonica to Berea, and persecuted there by the same adversaries. Acts xvii. 5-14. ¶ *They please not God.* The Jews made great pretensions of zeal for God. They thought they were

the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time

serving God even by maltreating and killing his children. See John xvi. 2; Acts xxvi. 9-11. But they knew not what manner of spirit they were of. Luke ix. 55; 1 John iv. 20. Unhappily, they were not the only persons who have burned with "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Rom. x. 2. But the opposition of such zealots need not shake the faith of Christians. See Matt. v. 11, 12.

16. *Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles.* No instance of the kind is particularly mentioned by the apostle. But the conduct of the Jews at Thessalonica, shortly before the date of this epistle, manifests such a spirit. Acts xvii. 5, 13. And the same spirit was manifested by them at an earlier date, when they stirred up the people and "raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas," who had avowed an intention to "turn to the Gentiles." Acts xiii. 44-52. ¶ *That they might be saved.* "That is, as freely as others, and on the same terms, not by conversion to Judaism, but by repentance and faith."—*Barnes*. ¶ *To fill up their sins always.* See notes on Matt. xxiii. 32-36. ¶ *For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* "The wrath of God is come upon them in the end. They have killed Jesus and their own prophets, and they have persecuted us, neither care they for God, but are contrary to all, forbidding us to preach unto you that ye might be saved; but the vengeance of God is come upon them in the end. Their measure was full, and the destruction of Jerusalem was at hand."—*Knatchbull*. "God was to visit them immediately in vengeance, to scatter them among all nations, to destroy the largest portion of them, and to cause the remnant of this miserable race to bear the most manifest marks of his indignation. This came to pass about seventeen years after Paul wrote this

in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul,

epistle, to wit, in the year of Jesus Christ seventy."—*Calmet*. This condign punishment was not only signally displayed at Jerusalem, in the destruction of the city and temple, and the slaughter and dispersion of the inhabitants, but it affected also the Jews who dwelt in foreign lands, crippling their power and destroying their influence, so that afterwards Christians had comparative rest from persecution. 2 Thess. i. 7. "But divine wrath is speedily coming upon them, and will be carried to the greatest extremity; not at Jerusalem only, but everywhere else in their various settlements in heathen countries. Though the remarkable circumstances which attended the destruction of Jerusalem, so particularly represented by Josephus, who was an eye-witness of them, and so exactly corresponding to our Lord's prediction, have fixed the attention of Christians chiefly on that catastrophe; yet it is well known that vast numbers of the Jewish nation were soon after destroyed in other provinces of the Roman Empire, particularly under Trajan and Adrian; under the former 460,000 men in Egypt and Cyprus, and under the latter above 580,000, as Xiphilinus informs us from Dio."—*Doddridge*. To the same effect, many other commentators. See *Selections*.

17. *Being taken from you for a short time.* It would seem that when Paul was driven out from Thessalonica, Acts xvii. 10, he intended to return very soon; or the meaning may be, that in a short time after his departure, he felt this irrepressible longing to see them again face to face, in which sense only he was absent from them, being present in heart or spirit.

18. *Even I Paul, &c.* This repetition of his name is an emphatic declaration of his desire for a personal meeting with them. He had sent



once and again; but Satan hindered us.

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

Timothy to establish and comfort them, ch. iii 2, but he desired to see them again personally, that mutual benefit might be enjoyed, as described in Rom. i. 11, 12. ¶ *But Satan hindered us.* Satan "is a mere Hebrew word, and signifies an adversary, an enemy, an accuser."—*Cruden*. Sometimes, at least, it indicates a human being. Matt. xvi. 23. "I have been detained here by ill-disposed persons."—*Gilpin*. Most commentators agree in opinion that the hindrance was in some way occasioned by the opposition of the Jews.

19, 20. *What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?* See notes on 1 Cor. ix. 15-19; 2 Cor. i. 14. ¶ *His coming.* There is an evident reference here to the manifestation of divine power in the judgment mentioned ver. 16. Our Lord foretold this "coming," when men should be rewarded according to their works, whether good or bad, and assured his hearers that some of them would live long enough to witness it. Matt. xvi. 27, 28. Compare Matt. xxiv. 29-35. That event was then near at hand; and Paul refers to it as the period when a discrimination should be made between the friends and the enemies of the gospel. He rejoiced and gloried in the patience and faith of his disciples under persecution, as it indicated, among its blessed effects, an escape from the impending ruin. See notes on 1 Cor. i. 7, 8.

### CHAPTER III.

1. *When we could no longer forbear.* When we could no longer endure our anxiety on your account. The plural form is used; but it is manifest from ver. 5, that Paul speaks particularly

### CHAPTER III.

**W**HEREFORE when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow labourer in the

of himself. ¶ *Thought it good to be left at Athens alone.* Preferred to be left alone for a season, destitute of aid and comfort from my fellow-labourer, for the sake of hearing from you and ministering to your spiritual wants.

2. *And sent Timotheus.* That is, from Athens. The visit of Timothy to Athens, from which place Paul says he sent him, is not distinctly mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. But it is recorded that the brethren who conducted Paul to Athens received from him, on their return, "a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed." Acts xvii. 15; and it may safely be presumed that they obeyed the summons. ¶ *Our brother, &c.* This testimony to the faithfulness and usefulness of Timothy serves the double purpose of exhibiting the extent of Paul's self-denial in depriving himself of such an associate, and his anxiety to promote the welfare of the Thessalonians, by sending one so well qualified to instruct and comfort them. ¶ *To establish you.* To strengthen you, to confirm you, in your Christian faith and profession. ¶ *And to comfort you concerning your faith.* "It is evident that they were suffering persecution on account of their faith in the Lord Jesus; that is, for their believing in him as a Saviour. The object of sending Timothy was to suggest such topics of consolation as would sustain them in their trials, that is, that he was the Son of God; that the people of God had been persecuted in all ages; that God was able to support them, &c."—*Barnes*.

3. *That no man should be moved.* Discouraged, disheartened, induced to renounce the faith. ¶ *For yourselves*

gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith :

3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent

*know, &c.* This "supplies the reason why they ought not to faint; namely, that persecution was not a thing unexpected, but the very appointment of God respecting them."—*Jowett*. They were not to think that some strange thing had happened to them, 1 Pet. iv. 12; but they should remember that their Master and many faithful disciples had also suffered in the same cause.

4. *We told you before, &c.* We are not informed in the Acts of the Apostles when or how Paul forewarned his disciples that they must endure persecution. But when he visited the Thessalonians, he was fresh from imprisonment and scourging at Philippi; and it would be very strange if he had not alluded to his own persecution for the sake of the gospel, and warned his hearers that they might reasonably expect similar treatment.

5. *For this cause, &c.* "For this special reason, in addition to the general love and regard I bear for you, feeling that I could no longer contain myself, I sent to know your faith, lest by any means, in time of persecution, the tempter should have tempted you, and, as a consequence our labor should have been in vain."—*Jowett*. "Knowing that you would be persecuted, and knowing that your apostasy was possible, I sent to know your faith; whether you continued steadfast in the truth, lest you might have been tempted by Satan, to consult your present ease, and abandon the gospel for which you suffered persecution."

to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you :

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith :

—*Clarke*. ¶ *The tempter*. This word, like *Satan* in ch. ii. 18, has been supposed to refer to a great fallen spirit, who divides the empire of the universe with the Almighty. There is no good reason, however, to believe that the apostle referred to anything beyond the persecutions which his brethren suffered, which he personified as the *tempter*. The following note expresses the meaning briefly and accurately: "I feared lest these trials of your faith might have been too severe for you; and, in my tenderness, I could not forbear sending Timothy to inquire after your situation."—*Gilpin*. See note on ch. ii. 18. ¶ *Have tempted you*. "To tempt doth ordinarily signify no more than to offer temptations, to propose, or suggest those objects, which, if the man resist and reject, are matter of virtue in him; but *having tempted* here signifies evidently having brought them into sin, that is, wrought upon them, corrupted them by temptations; for otherwise his labor in preaching the gospel to them would not become vain by that means."—*Hammond*.

6, 7. *But now when Timotheus came, &c.* When Timothy returned, the heart of Paul was comforted by the assurance that the Thessalonians remained firm in the faith and cherished an affectionate remembrance of him. In the midst of all his afflictions he rejoiced in their steadfastness, feeling that his labor on their behalf had not been in vain. See notes on 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7.

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now God himself and our

Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

8. *For now we live, &c.* "The apostle regards his affliction as a sort of death, from which he is roused to life by the news of his converts. When he thought of the persecutions that surrounded him, and the possibility of their falling off from the faith, he was as one 'having the sentence of death in himself;' but now in their life he lives."—*Jowett*.

9. *For what thanks can we render to God, &c.* The apostle acknowledges himself incapable of rendering thanks adequate to the mercies which God had bestowed on him; he was overpowered by his sense of obligation to the Author and Bestower of all good things.

10. *Night and day praying exceedingly, &c.* This was a subject of special and urgent prayer. ¶ *Might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.* Their faith was firm and unshaken, ver. 6-8, and in this sense was sufficiently perfect, and lacked nothing. But in his short visit to them, Paul had not been able to make them acquainted with "all the counsel of God." Acts xx. 27. Some things they yet lacked of a perfect knowledge of "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Rom. xv. 29. This lack the apostle desired to supply. On one important point he communicated further information in ch. iv. of this epistle; but he strongly desired an opportunity for a more free and full intercourse with them, face to face, so that he might know precisely wherein their knowledge was imperfect, and supply all which was lacking.

11. *Now God himself and our Father, &c.* "Now may God himself even our Father."—*Macknight*. ¶ *And our Lord Jesus Christ.* "In conclusion, Paul explicitly utters the petition that God and Christ may prepare for him the way to his dear Christian brethren in Thessalonica, and fill the latter themselves with love, and confirm them in sanctification. It is peculiar to this passage that Christ also is here besought, along with God, to prepare the way. External relations are commonly attributed, in the Scriptures, to the Father, but this passage shows that it is allowable to bring these also before Christ. However, no example but this occurs in the New Testament, as, indeed, in general, prayers to Christ are seldom found. But the juxtaposition of Father and Son, taken strictly, is to be understood thus: 'May the Father work so and so, through his Son.'"—*Olshausen*.

12. *And the Lord make you to increase, &c.* The reference is probably to the Lord Jesus Christ. See note on ver. 11.

13. *To the end, &c.* "Which is the sure means of obtaining that grace from God that may preserve you pure and holy, so as may be acceptable before him who is both our God and our Father, at that great day now approaching, to the destruction of the obdurate unbelievers, and rescue of the faithful, which is one coming of Christ with his angels. See Jude 4."—*Hammond*. The venerable commentator adds, "and so in like manner at the dreadful day of doom."

## CHAPTER IV.

**F**URTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.

But he manifestly did not regard this as the event specially referred to by the apostle. There is no good reason to doubt that this *coming* is the same as that which is mentioned in ch. ii. 19. At that *coming*, the presence and power of Christ was gloriously manifested in the overthrow of the Jewish ecclesiastical power, and the establishment of the gospel; and, as Hammond expresses it, in "the destruction of the obdurate unbelievers, and rescue of the faithful." See notes on 1 Cor. i. 7, 8.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. *How ye ought to walk.* Or, conduct. As a rule of life, Paul refers to the instructions which he gave to his brethren in person. "We may of course assume that the exhortations which follow contain only a repetition of the same, for they keep altogether to generals, and it is scarcely imaginable that Paul in the short time of his sojourn could have gone beyond generals."—*Olshausen*.

2-7. *For ye know what commandments, &c.* The following paraphrase exhibits the meaning of this passage with sufficient clearness and particularity: "(2.) For ye know what commandments at the first we gave you, by authority from the Lord Jesus, as pleasing to God; commandments very different from those enjoined by

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6 That no *man* go beyond and defraud his brother, in *any* matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

the heathen priests as pleasing to their deities. (3.) For we told you, this is the command of God, even your sanctification; and, in particular, that ye should abstain from every kind of whoredom; and I now repeat the same injunction to you. (4.) I told you also, this is the will of God, that every one of you should use his own body in the holy and honorable manner which is suitable to your profession and hopes as Christians; (5.) and not as a passive subject of lust, after the manner of the Gentiles, who have no knowledge either of the character of God, or of what is acceptable to him. (6.) That no man should go beyond the bounds of chastity, or defraud his brother in this matter, by defiling either him or his relations, whether male or female; because the Lord Jesus will severely punish all such gross misdeeds, as I also formerly told and fully testified to you, when I preached to you in Thessalonica. (7.) Besides, God hath not called us into his kingdom and promised us pardon, that we should live in impurity; but to follow holiness."—*Macknight*. A more general idea is supposed by Barnes to be conveyed by the word *defraud* in ver. 6: The Greek is so general that it may prohibit all kinds of fraud, overreaching, or covetousness, and may refer to any attempt to deprive another of his rights, whether it be the right which he has

8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.

9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

in his property, or his rights as a husband, or his rights in any other respect. It is a general command not to defraud; in no way to take advantage of another; in no way to deprive him of his rights." But although the language be of this general character, most commentators think it was used by the apostle with special reference to the particular subject under discussion, namely, unchastity; and this interpretation appears more in harmony with ver. 7.

8. *He therefore that despiseth, &c. Or, rejecteth*, as in the margin. "Therefore the despiser (that is, of the commands which have preceded) despises not man but God, who gives to you his Holy Spirit. Compare ch. iii. 13." — *Jowett*. Or we may understand the apostle to say, that these commands rested not on human authority, namely, on his own; but they were given by him under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and were therefore of divine authority; so that those who rejected and disobeyed the commands did so in contempt not merely of man, but of God.

9. *Ye yourselves are taught of God*. "The word here rendered 'taught of God' occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is correctly translated, and must refer here to some direct teaching of God on their own hearts, for Paul speaks of their being so taught by him as to need no special precepts in the case." — *Barnes*. "But concerning love to the brethren, I have no need to write to you; for that is a lesson ye already know, being taught of God himself, to the end that ye love one another. The meaning is not simply, 'I need not teach you, for God himself teaches you;' but, 'I need not teach you, for God teaches you effectually.'" — *Jowett*.

10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

10. *And indeed ye do it, &c.* You manifest your brotherly love by your conduct "toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia." ¶ *Increase more and more*. Let your love towards the brethren extend more and more widely, and become even more intense.

11, 12. *And that ye study to be quiet, &c.* "And earnestly to study to avoid a contentious, meddling disposition, whether on pretence of public-spiritedness, or any other pretence; and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your own hands at your respective occupations, as I commanded you when I was with you. That your behavior may be comely in the sight of the heathen, who might speak evil of the gospel, if ye become idle: also that, being able to supply your own wants, ye may have need of nothing from others. That manner of spending time, which the apostle calls 'disorderly walking,' 2 Thess. iii. 6, 11, was too much practised by all the Greeks, as may be gathered from the character given of them, Acts xvii. 21. Many of the Thessalonian brethren were employed in trade and manufactures; others of them gained their livelihood by serving traders, manufacturers, farmers, &c. To such, the injunction of laboring with their hands was given with great propriety, to prevent the heathen from imagining that the gospel encouraged sloth in those who had embraced the Christian religion." — *Macknight*. "These words derived their chief illustration from the Second Epistle. From both together we infer that the church had fallen into disorder, and that some of its members had given up their daily occupations. This disorder may very probably have arisen from an expectation of the

12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of nothing.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the

archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

## CHAPTER V.

**B**UT of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say,

immediate coming of Christ. Supposing this to be the case, a thread of connection is supplied with the new subject, which suggests itself to the apostle's mind, at ver. 13. The Thessalonians are excited and unsettled, and one of the causes of their unsettlement is the state of the dead."—*Jowett*.

13-18. For a general explanation of this passage, see Note on the Resurrection, II. 3. (c.), at the end of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

## CHAPTER V.

1-3. *But of the times and the seasons, &c.* Most commentators have supposed the apostle here to refer to the same event which is described in ch. iv. 13-18. There is good reason, however, to believe that he refers to another and a distinct *coming* of the Lord. In ch. iv. 13-18, he encouraged the hearts of his brethren in the midst of their trials, with the hope of a resurrection to an endless and happy life. Here he encourages them with the hope of "rest" from their present afflictions, 2 Thess. i. 7, in consequence of the overthrow of their persecutors. The subjects have a natural affinity,

but they are by no means identical. "In the notes on Acts i. 6, 7, it has already been shown that the χρόνος ἡ καιρός, *times or seasons*, the very terms which are used here, refer to the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth; and we may fairly presume that they have the same meaning in this place."—*Clarke*. In accordance with this opinion, the whole passage, ver. 1-11, is interpreted by this commentator. To the same effect are the following paraphrase and note by a more ancient and not less judicious writer: "But concerning that notable time or season of Christ's coming in judgment on the Jews and others, to destroy the obdurate and rescue the believers, I shall not need to say much to you; for this hath been oft told you, that as it is not now far off, so when it comes it shall come on a sudden. Matt. xxiv. 27, 42; Luke xvii. 27; see 2 Pet. iii. 10; and this not only in Judea, but in other places where the obdurate Jews and Gnostics shall be (see Matt. xxiv. 28) and continue to persecute the Christians. For as in the still and quiet part of the night, when men are fast asleep, the thief comes, and by the windows en-

Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep,

ters into and rifles the house; so when they are most secure, persecuting the Christians in the bitterest manner without all fear, then shall this ruin come upon them on the sudden. What *times* and *seasons* here signify, appears sufficiently by ver. 2, where in another phrase the same thing is expressed by *the day of Christ cometh*; which is without question the same which is so oft called *the coming of Christ*, for the destroying the enemies of Christianity, which he should do in the *proper seasons*, 1 Tim. vi. 15. So Matt. xvi. 3, *the signs of the times* were the signs of that approaching destruction; and accordingly, Luke xii. 56, it is called this *time* or *season*. And to this matter (plainly set down before, ch. ii. 16, the full vials of God's wrath falling on the persecuting Jews) the rest of this discourse to ver. 12 doth evidently belong, and the suddenness and unexpectedness of it (and the surprise of all carnal men which joined with the persecutors or went on in unchristian sins) described, as it is frequently in the gospels, Matt. xxiv., Luke xix., and in the Epistles, Rom. xiii., 2 Pet. iii., and elsewhere. And that it cannot belong to the last coming of Christ to judgment or final doom appears—by the end to which this discourse is here designed by the apostle, namely, to comfort the Christians that were under persecution, and give them patience and constancy, for which this was a fit consideration, that this judgment of God would come suddenly, and when it was least expected, and so would surprise them if

as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain

they were not watchful: and this but a transcript of Christ's words on this matter, Mark xiii. 32 (and the very word *season* there made use of, ver. 33), and more particularly under the phrase of *the thief in the night*, Matt. xxiv. 43. All which belonged peculiarly to this doom upon the Jews, and not to the general judgment. And if it be here questioned how this destruction of the Jews should concern the Christians in Macedonia, and so be matter of such particular advertisement to the Thessalonians, I answer, that the Jews, being at this time dispersed into several parts much farther from Judea than Macedonia, did likewise, wheresoever they were, oppose the apostle's preaching to the Gentiles, and not only so, but persecuted those that received the faith, with all bitterness."—Hammond.

4-8. *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, &c.* The general idea here is, that the disciples at Thessalonica had been forewarned and instructed so that the impending judgment would not come unexpectedly; that they were children of light, or enlightened as to this truth, and therefore should be wakeful to a sense of duty, and faithful in its performance; and that they should fortify themselves against discouragement or apostasy by cherishing firm faith in the gospel, fervent love to God, and a confident hope of preservation. See note on Eph. vi. 14-17.

9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, &c.* That God hath not appointed any of his children to the

salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

12 And we beseech you,

endurance of endless wrath, but that he will be gracious to all, and make them partakers of endless life, and holiness, and happiness, is doubtless revealed in the New Testament; but I think the apostle speaks of a different subject in this place. By *wrath* he seems to refer to that signal judgment, ver. 3, which was about to befall the Jews, in the destruction of their city, and the slaughter and dispersion of the people, and by *salvation* to mean especially preservation of life in that hour of peril, and deliverance from the persecution which Christians were then suffering. "For of this be sure, that this great judgment which is now coming is not designed by God against the pure, constant Christians, but upon their enemies and persecutors, nor for such as we to be destroyed, but to be delivered by that means."

—*Hammond*. "It is very obvious, that, in the preceding verses, the apostle refers simply to the destruction of the Jewish polity, and to the terrible judgments which were about to fall on the Jews as a nation; therefore they are the people who were appointed to wrath. But even this appointment to wrath does not signify eternal damnation; nothing of the kind is intended in the word. It is possible that many of those wretched Jews, during their calamities, and especially during the siege of their city, did turn to the Lord who smote them, and found that salvation which he never denies to the sincere penitent."—*Clarke*. For the *salvation* which the Christians obtained, at the time when these "terrible judgments" were executed, see notes on Matt. xxiv. 13; 2 Thess. i. 7.

10. *Who died for us, &c.* "For he that died on purpose to bring us to good life, to redeem us from all iniquity,

brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you,

uity, will certainly preserve and secure those that are thus redeemed, that live those lives which he requires, and adhere constant to his commandments; and therefore for us, without the help of our worldly providences, he will certainly secure us, preserve these lives of ours so long as he sees that best for us, and that most remarkably at this time, in destroying the persecutors, and rescuing the persecuted, and in another world preserving us to eternal life."—*Hammond*.

11. *Wherefore comfort yourselves together, &c.* Encourage each other to steadfastness in the faith, and to patient endurance of persecutions, in the firm belief that the hour draweth near when ye shall be delivered from the power of the oppressor, and shall enjoy rest and peace, while the persecutors who have sowed to the wind shall reap the whirlwind.

12, 13. *To know them which labor, &c.* We find no account of the ordination of elders or religious teachers in the church at Thessalonica; but we have no reason to doubt that such were ordained, because the apostle, even before he preached there, was accustomed to ordain elders in every church which he planted, Acts xiv. 23; and he afterwards directed Titus, whom he had left in Crete, to "set in order the things that are wanting," that he should "ordain elders in every city." Tit. i. 5. Such teachers and ministers of the word were entitled to the respect and love of their flocks, in proportion to their faithfulness in encouraging the well disposed, and admonishing the unruly. Moreover, if they devoted their time to the instruction of the brethren, they might justly claim a generous supply of their temporal wants. See note on 1 Cor. ix. 11.



brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

14. *Unruly.* Or, *disorderly*, as in the margin. ¶ *Feeble-minded.* "Faint-hearted."—*Robinson.* The word does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. ¶ *Support the weak.* See note on Rom. xv. 1. ¶ *Be patient.* See note on 1 Cor. xiii. 4, where the same word is rendered "suffereth long."

15. *See that none render evil for evil.* See notes on Matt. v. 39, 44. ¶ *And to all men.* Although Christians are bound to "follow that which is good," and to be kind, "especially unto them who are of the household of faith," they are also under obligation to "do good unto all men," in imitation of their heavenly Father, who "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. v. 45; Gal. vi. 10.

16. *Rejoice evermore.* "In every season keep a joyful mind."—*Conybeare.* Whatever perils may beset you, whatever persecutions you may endure, remember that God is greater than your persecutors, and they cannot pluck you out of his hands. John x. 29. Rejoice in him as your sure defence against all evil and all danger. Rom. viii. 31-39.

17. *Pray without ceasing.* See note on Rom. xii. 12.

18. *In everything give thanks.* All the blessings which we enjoy are bestowed by our heavenly Father, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James i. 17. And even those blessings in disguise, the afflictions which we endure, are administered by our Father "for our profit;" and although "for the present not joyous but grievous," yet they "afterward yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are

16 Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

exercised thereby." Heb. xii. 10, 11. Under all circumstances, therefore, we should be thankful unto him.

19. *Quench not the Spirit.* "Hinder not the gifts of the Spirit, by turning away from them that have them, and not suffering them to speak. These gifts were quenched by strife, emulation, schisms, and contention about them, 1 Cor. iii. 1-3; by a disorderly use of them, not to the edification of the church, but to vain ostentation, confusion in the church, and the scandal of heathens, 1 Cor. xiv.; by a neglect to exercise them, 1 Tim. iv. 14; and by the prohibition of them. 'Forbid not to speak with tongues,' 1 Cor. xiv. 39."—*Whitby.* To the same effect, *Hammond*, *Macknight*, and many others. See note on 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

20. *Despise not prophesyings.* See notes on Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 1. "We know from the first epistle to Corinth, that this warning was not unneeded in the early church. (See 1 Cor. xiv.) The gift of prophesying (that is, inspired preaching) had less the appearance of a supernatural gift than several of the other Charisms; and hence it was thought little of by those who sought more for display than edification."—*Conybeare.*

21. *Prove all things, &c.* "Do not believe every preacher pretending to inspiration; but examine all things offered to you, comparing them with the doctrines of Christ and of his apostles, and with the former revelations; and hold fast that which, upon examination, is found good.—This precept may have been originally intended for those spiritual men who had the gift of discerning spirits, and whose office it was to try those who pretended to prophesy, or to speak by inspiration;

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

and to direct the church in their opinion concerning them. Nevertheless, it may be well understood in a more general sense, as requiring Christians in all ages, before they receive any religious doctrine, to examine whether it be consonant to right reason and to the word of God." — *Macknight*.

22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil.* It is not enough that we abstain from that which is undoubtedly sinful; we should avoid, also, that which is of doubtful character. See note on Rom. xiv. 23. Not only so, we should abstain from many things which we consider to be perfectly innocent, if our brethren honestly believe them to be sinful, lest we wound weak consciences by doing that which to them *appears* to be evil. See notes on Rom. xiv. 19-21.

23. *And the very God of peace.* See note on Rom. i. 7. ¶ *Sanctify you wholly.* See note on John xvii. 17. ¶ *Whole spirit and soul and body.* By this periphrasis the apostle indicates simply the whole man. "Had he a distinct thought attached to each of these words? Probably not. He is not writing a treatise on the soul, but pouring forth, from the fulness of his heart, a prayer for his converts.

26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

¶ The first *epistle* unto the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

Language thus used should not be too closely analyzed. His words may be compared to similar expressions among ourselves; for example, 'With my heart and soul.' Who would distinguish between the two? Who could define the difference between soul and spirit in the Alexandrian, scholastic, or any other philosophy? Least of all should we attempt to do so in Scripture, which no more anticipates the metaphysical distinctions of later ages than their discoveries in astronomy or geology." — *Jowett*. ¶ *Blameless unto the coming*, &c. See notes on ver. 3 and 1 Cor. i. 7, 8.

24. *Faithful is he*, &c. See notes on Rom. iii. 3, 4.

25. *Brethren, pray for us.* See notes on Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 11.

26. *Greet all the brethren*, &c. See note on Rom. xvi. 16.

27. *I charge you.* Or, *adjure*, as in the margin. ¶ *That this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.* To the whole church. It was designed for the instruction and edification of all.

28. *The grace of our Lord*, &c. See note on Rom. xvi. 20.

The subscription, like that to other epistles, has no canonical authority, and is generally considered wrong.

## SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

### CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren,

as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of

### CHAPTER I.

This epistle is generally supposed to have been written soon after the former to the same church. A principal object of the writer was to correct an error prevailing in the church at Thessalonica concerning "the coming of the Lord." Either through misunderstanding of the former epistle, or through the instructions given by false teachers, many supposed that "the coming of the Lord" was very near at hand, ch. ii. 2; and some even appear to have abandoned labor for the benefit of themselves and families, under the impression that further provision for future events was unnecessary, ch. iii. 10, 11. For the correction of these errors this epistle seems chiefly designed; but, as in all his other epistles, together with the discussion of the main points, the apostle intermingles instruction on other important subjects.

1, 2. *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, &c.* See note on 1 Thess. i. 1.

3. *We are bound to thank God, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 8. ¶ *Your faith groweth, &c.* Paul had heard of the errors which had crept into the church

since his departure, ch. ii. 2; and he seems also to have heard that the brethren generally remained steadfast in the midst of persecution, ver. 4. ¶ *Charity of every one, &c.* Your abundant mutual love.

4. *So that we ourselves glory, &c.* I boast of your patience and faith in all the churches, and point to you as an example worthy of emulation. ¶ *In all your persecutions, &c.* "It would seem from this that the persecutions and trials to which the apostle referred in his first epistle, were still continued."—*Barnes*. See note on 1 Thess. ii. 14.

5–10. *Which is a manifest token, &c.* The following paraphrase so clearly exhibits the apostle's design in this whole passage, that I quote it entire. "(5.) Which is a notable means of evidencing the great justice of God's providence and dispensations of the things of this world, when all the persecutions that fall on you tend but to the trial and approval of your constancy and fidelity to Christ, and so to the making you capable of that glorious deliverance which Christ will shortly work for all that adhere to him, when the unfaithful and cowardly are

God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense

destroyed with the persecutors. And indeed this is it for which they persecute you, as they have done us, that we profess to believe that Christ will shortly exercise this regal power of his for the destroying of his enemies and rescuing the persecuted out of their calamities. (6.) It being most just with God to punish your persecutors; to deal with them as they have dealt with you; (7.) And to give you, in proportion to your sufferings, a participation of ease and joy with the apostles of Christ, at that glorious coming of his to the punishing of his enemies foretold, Matt. ch. xxiv., with those notable messengers and ministers, and executioners of his power, (8.) In rendering a most severe vengeance to all the obdurate Jews, and wicked, carnal, heretical Gnostic Christians. (9.) Which shall be finally destroyed by the judgment of God, at his powerful appearance in vengeance against the crucifiers. (10.) At which time also he will show miraculous acts of mercy to all pious faithful Christians, to deliver them (and so consequently you, who have received the gospel preached by us), in the day of his vengeance on his enemies."—*Hammond*.

5. *Manifest token, &c.* See note on Phil. i. 28. ¶ *Worthy of the kingdom of God.* Worthy to enjoy the blessings of that kingdom of God which is about to be established by the visible manifestation of his power and a righteous discrimination between his friends and his enemies. See *Lightfoot*, quoted in note on Luke xvii. 20.

6. *To them that trouble you.* The prime movers of the persecutions (ver. 4) which the Christians in Thessalonica and other Gentile cities suffered, were Jews. Although generally destitute of political power, they were active in "stirring up" the people who had such power, as is manifest from the history of the apostles. Among other

tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed

proofs, see Acts xiii. 50; xiv. 19; xvii. 5, 13. These foreign Jews were the arch-enemies of the apostles and of the converts to Christianity, and their principal *troublers*; and they were overwhelmed in the common calamity which befell their nation. *Tribulation* was recompensed unto them.

7. *And to you who are troubled.* Namely, those who held fast the profession of their faith, and endured persecution from the adversaries of the truth. ¶ *Rest.* That is, relief from persecution; such rest as the churches enjoyed after the conversion of their most active persecutor. Acts ix. 31. For an answer to the question, how the desolation of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish polity affected the ability of the Jews who dwelt in remote provinces to persecute the disciples of Jesus, see *Hammond*, quoted in note on 1 Thess. v. 1-3. ¶ *When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, &c.* "The revelation of Christ, or the coming of Christ, is a phrase of doubtful signification, sometimes signifying the coming to the final doom, but sometimes also, that coming that was described, Matt. xxiv., and was to be within that generation. And so sure it signifies in several places in St. Peter, 1 Pet. i. 7, 13; iv. 13; and the deliverance ready to be revealed in the last time, 1 Pet. i. 5, the destruction of the Jews being the time of the deliverance and escaping to the Christians that were persecuted by them. See Rom. xiii. 11.—So here it most probably signifies, where the vengeance on the oppressors, that is, the crucifiers of Christ and persecutors of Christians, is described, and an appendix of that *rest* and *release* to the oppressed, which is that *deliverance* so oft promised to them that persevere and endure, and outlast those persecutions; and that *in that day*, ver. 10, which is the notation of that time of vengeance upon the Jews. As for

from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking ven-

what is said first of the *angels*, secondly, of the *flame of fire*, thirdly, of the *everlasting destruction*, which may here seem to interpret this revelation of Christ so as to signify the day of the general doom; it is evident, first, that the angels being ministers of God in executing his judgments on nations, this remarkable vengeance on the Jews may well here be, and is elsewhere, fitly expressed by his coming, or revealing himself, with or by his angels. So Matt. xvi. 27, and elsewhere often. Then, secondly, for the fire of flame, or *flaming fire*, that is ordinarily the expression of the appearance of angels (he maketh his ministers a flaming fire, saith the Psalmist), and so adds little to the former. And God's judgments, if they be destructive, are ordinarily in prophetic phrase expressed by flaming fire. See Matt. iii. 12. Thirdly, for the *ὀλεθρὸς αἰῶνος* that signifies an *utter destruction*. When of the chaff it is said, Matt. iii. 12, that it shall be burned with unquenchable fire, it refers to the custom of winnowing, where the fire being set to the chaff, and assisted with the wind, never goes out till it have burned up all. Meanwhile, not excluding the eternal torments of hell-fire which expect all impenitent sinners that thus fall, but looking particularly on the visible destruction and vengeance which seizeth on whole nations or multitudes at once in this life. And that this is the meaning of the everlasting destruction here, appears by all that here follows in this chapter, the time assigned for it, *when Christ shall come* (the ordinary expression of this his vengeance on his crucifiers) to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired among all believers in that day; which that it belongs to somewhat then approaching, and wherein those Thessalonians were then concerned, not to the general judgment yet future, is evident by his prayer for them, that they may have their part in that great favor of

vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

God, ver. 11, and that the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified among them to whom he writes, and that they may be glorified in or through him by this remarkable deliverance, which should shortly befall them which were now persecuted." — *Hammond*. Three things are especially observable in the foregoing long and important note. (1.) Dr. Hammond is careful to mention repeatedly his belief in a future day of doom or of general judgment, and the endless misery of the obdurate and impenitent. (2.) He distinctly asserts that the language of the apostle here does not indicate that *day* or that *misery*, but that it has special reference to a day of vengeance then near at hand, namely, the day when the nation of unbelieving Jews suffered that temporal destruction which Jesus had foretold, and when the believing Christians had *rest*, being preserved from destruction and delivered from persecution. (3.) He declares and proves that all the terms used in this description are properly applicable to the subject of which he says the apostle was particularly speaking.

8. *In flaming fire*. "The destruction of Jerusalem and the whole Jewish state is described as if the whole frame of this world were to be dissolved. Nor is it strange, when God destroyed his habitation and city, places once so dear to him, with so direful and sad an overthrow; his own people, whom he accounted of as much or more than the whole world beside, by so dreadful and amazing plagues. Matt. xxiv. 29, 30. 'The sun shall be darkened, &c.: Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, &c.,' which yet are said to fall out within that generation, ver. 34. 2 Pet. iii. 10, 'The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,' &c. Compare with this Deut. xxxii. 22; Heb. xii. 26; and observe that by *elements* are understood the *Mosaic elements*, Gal. iv. 9; Cor. ii. 20;

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

and you will not doubt that St. Peter speaks only of the conflagration of Jerusalem, the destruction of the nation, and the abolishing the dispensation of Moses."—*Lightfoot*. See note on ver. 7.

9. *Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.* The apostle seems to have had in his mind the prediction of a similar calamity by the ancient prophet: "I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence; and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame which shall not be forgotten." Jer. xxiii. 39, 40. This is confessedly a prophecy of the temporary banishment of the Jewish people from their city and temple. "It is very evident that the 'presence of the Lord' was in a peculiar manner among the children of Israel. See Exo. xxxiii. 14-17; compare Isa. lxiii. 9, and Ps. li. 11. The tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple at Jerusalem were considered by the Jews as the peculiar residence of Jehovah. There he abode, and there they performed all their religious services to him. In the temple at Jerusalem, God is said to dwell between the cherubim. Ps. lxxx. 1. The shew-bread placed there is called 'the loaves of the presence, or faces.' To be cast out of God's presence is to be banished from Judea into captivity, and from all the privileges which the Jews enjoyed in their land and temple-worship. This was the same as destroying them. They were thus destroyed, or cast out of God's presence, for seventy years, in their captivity at Babylon. But they were brought back from this captivity, and again enjoyed God's presence in their own land. At the time Paul wrote the words before us, the time was drawing near when they were to be again cast out of God's presence, and dispersed among all nations."—*Balfour*. This "destruction"

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony

is styled "everlasting." But the fact is well settled that the adjective *αἰώνιον*, which is here translated *everlasting*, as well as the noun *αἰών*, from which it is derived, do not necessarily nor indeed usually denote endless duration; but, "being ambiguous, are always to be understood according to the nature and circumstances of the things which they are applied to."—*MacKnight*. Sometimes a period of time is denoted no longer than the remnant of a man's life on earth. Exo. xxi. 6. The use of this word here, therefore, is not inconsistent with the foregoing interpretation. The time when this destruction should befall the ungodly indicates its character. "At this same time the Thessalonians were to obtain rest. The rest referred to was evidently rest from the persecutions they were enduring. See the context, and compare 2 Cor. vii. 5; Acts ix. 31. — Did the Thessalonians, then, find rest at the period when Jesus was revealed to take vengeance on the Jewish nation? Yes, this is a matter of history as well as fact. Our Lord, referring to this very period, said to his disciples, 'When these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' Luke xxi. 28. Those who endured to the end were not only saved from the calamity which came on the Jews, but the Christians were at rest from their persecutions throughout the Roman Empire. The Jews were in too much trouble themselves, then, to trouble others."—*Balfour*. See note on ver. 7.

10. *When he shall come, &c.* Our Lord often predicted his coming, in the glory of his Father, to discriminate between his friends and his enemies, to reward or punish them according to their several deserts, and to establish his kingdom on earth, superseding the Mosaic dispensation, but always fixed the time of his coming as being then near at hand, within the lifetime of some of his hearers. See Matt. xvi.

among you was believed) in that day.

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power:

12 That the name of our Lord

Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER II.

**N**OW we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our

27, 28; xxiv. 29-35. That time was very near, when the apostle wrote; and he intimates in this verse that his brethren at Thessalonica would not only obtain *rest* from persecution, ver. 7, but would witness this glorious coming of the Lord, and be filled with admiration at this display of divine power.

11, 12. *Count you worthy of this calling.* See note on ver. 5. ¶ *That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified in you.* "That is, that the Lord Jesus himself may be honored among you; the *name* often denoting the person. The idea is, that the apostle wished that the Lord Jesus might be honored among them by the fair application and development of the principles of his religion." — *Barnes*. ¶ *And ye in him.* That is, that ye may be distinguished as his disciples and friends, and manifested to the world as such by deliverance from the calamities which are now impending over your persecutors. "To which purpose we pray for you continually, that God will by his grace enable you to walk worthy of that high calling or privilege, that of being Christians, owned and vindicated by him, and powerfully accomplish and complete in you all the good works and fruits of faith and patience, which may render you acceptable in his sight. That Christ may have the honor of your patience, and you be rewarded for it according to the great mercy and goodness of God in Christ Jesus." — *Hammond*.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *By the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Rather, *concerning the coming*, as most critics agree. "Grotius, Ham-

mond, LeClerc, Whitby, Wetstein, and others, understand this of Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem and the Jewish state." — *Macknight*. And this is surely the most natural interpretation, if that was the character of the coming described in ch. i., for both manifestly refer to the same event. "But now, brethren, concerning that famous coming of Christ so often spoken of, ch. i. 5, &c., and mentioned to you by me, 1 Thess. v. 1, for the destroying and cutting off the crucifiers of Christ and persecutors of Christians, the thing which is justly looked on by you as the period of your miseries and persecutions so universally caused by them, and which consequently will be attended with the plentiful coming in of disciples to the Christian profession, and with a greater liberty of public assembling for the worship of Christ than our persecutions and dispersions will now afford us," &c. — *Hammond*. The converts at Thessalonica consisted of both Jews and Greeks, Acts xvii. 4, "who, in expectation of our Lord's prediction, as well as from their observation of the Jewish festivals, might be inclined to go up to Jerusalem. Moreover, till the writing of this epistle, if not long after, the Jewish converts kept up their synagogue-worship, and many proselytes and other Christians did not scruple to assemble with them. But after the destruction of Jerusalem, there was an end of the synagogue-worship, the day having revealed that God was no longer pleased with it, and then they met together still as churches of Christ, and this might be the *gathering together* here spoken of." — *Whitby*. Either of these interpretations may be correct,

Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither

by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by

as both are founded on undoubted facts. But the former, which is the more general, appears also to be preferable. See note on ch. i. 9.

2. *That ye be not soon shaken in mind*, &c. The apostle had heard, it would seem, that his brethren were in great anxiety, in regard to the supposed very near approach of the "day of the Lord;" and he here endeavors to quiet their apprehensions by the assurance that sufficient time remained to prepare for its approach, which would be indicated by suitable signs.

¶ *Neither by spirit*. "By any pretended spirit of prophecy." — *Barnes*.

This may refer to the predictions of false prophets; but more probably the reference is to some misconception or misrepresentation of Paul's language.

¶ *Nor by word*. The apostle had publicly spoken of this *day*, during his residence in Thessalonica; and his language had perhaps been misunderstood.

¶ *Nor by letter as from us*. Some suppose reference is made to a forged letter, purporting to have been written by Paul; others, with apparently better reason, understand him to refer to his First Epistle, in which this day is mentioned.

¶ *As that the day of Christ is at hand*. Very near: so near that it was no longer necessary to make provision for the supply of daily wants, ch. iii. 11, 12. "To conceive that signal day of the destruction of their enemies the Jews, and the deliverance of the Christians (mentioned Joel ii. 31, 32; Mal. iv. 1, 2) come, and find themselves deceived in that conception, might cause great trouble to them, and even shake their steadfastness in the faith." — *Whitby*.

"As if the day of Christ were at hand," &c. To this, also, do those passages belong, Heb. x. 37, 'Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come;' Jas. v. 9, 'Behold the judge is at the door;' Rev. i. 7, 'He cometh in the clouds;' and xxii. 12, 'Behold I come quickly.' With many other pas-

sages of that nature, all which must be understood of Christ's coming in judgment and vengeance against that wicked nation; and in this very sense must the words now before us be taken, and not otherwise, 'I will that he tarry till I come.' 'For thy part, Peter, thou shalt suffer death by thy countrymen the Jews; but as for him, I will that he shall tarry till I come and avenge myself upon this generation; and if I will so, what is that to thee?' The story that is told of both these apostles confirms this exposition; for it is taken for granted by all, that St. Peter had his crown of martyrdom before Jerusalem fell, and St. John survived the ruins of it." — *Lightfoot on John xxi. 22*. So evident is it that "the day of Christ," here, and "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," ver. 1, refer to a signal manifestation of divine power in the apostolic age, that they are so interpreted by many, who firmly believed in a yet future day of general judgment. And it is equally evident, though it be not so generally admitted, that both these phrases indicate the same period and event mentioned in ch. i. 5-10.

3. *For that day shall not come*.

These words were inserted, not improperly however, by the translators, to make the sense more perspicuous. Others have inserted other words, to the same effect: "That cannot be, till the apostasy come first." — *Haweis*. "Before that day the falling away must first have come." — *Conybeare*. ¶ *Except there come a falling away first*, &c. "Until an *apostasy* — ἀποστασία — shall have occurred, — the great apostasy. There is scarcely any passage of the New Testament which has given occasion to greater diversity of opinion than this. Some have referred it to a great apostasy from the Christian church, particularly on account of persecution, which would occur before the destruction of Jerusalem. The 'coming of the Lord' they suppose



any means : for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ;

refers to the destruction of the holy city, and according to this, the meaning is, that there would be a great apostasy before that event would take place. Of this opinion was Vitranga, who refers the 'apostasy' to a great defection from the faith which took place between the time of Nero and Trajan. Whitby, also, refers it to an event which was to take place before the destruction of Jerusalem, and supposes that the apostasy would consist in a return from the Christian to the Jewish faith by multitudes of professed converts. The 'man of sin,' according to him, means the Jewish nation, so characterized on account of its eminent wickedness. Hammond explains the apostasy by the defection to the Gnostics, by the arts of Simon Magus, whom he supposes to be 'the man of sin;' and by the 'day of the Lord' he also understands the destruction of Jerusalem. Grotius takes Caius Caesar or Caligula to be the 'man of sin,' and by the apostasy he understands his abominable wickedness. In the beginning of his government, he says, his plans of iniquity were concealed, and the hopes of all were excited in regard to his reign; but his secret iniquity was subsequently 'revealed,' and his true character understood. Wetstein understands by the 'man of sin' Titus and the Flavian house. He says that he does not understand it of the Roman Pontiff, who 'is not one such as the demonstrative pronoun thrice repeated designates, and who neither sits in the temple of God, nor calls himself God, nor Caius, nor Simon Gioriae, nor any Jewish impostor, nor Simon Magus.' Koppe refers it to the king mentioned in Dan. xi. 36. According to him, the reference is to a great apostasy of the Jews from the worship of God, and the 'man of sin' is the Jewish people." — *Barnes*. Other opinions are stated by this learned writer, who refers, for more full details, to Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, Diss. xxii. With many other Protestant writers, Barnes sup-

poses the "man of sin" to be the Pope of Rome, or rather the Papacy, the Popes collectively, and the "apostasy" to be the defection from the pure truth of the gospel, which resulted in the establishment of the Papal church. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, without additional light, to decide with absolute certainty to what the apostle referred. The interpretation given by Whitby seems at least quite as probable as any other; namely, that the *falling away* was "the great apostasy of the Jews foretold by Christ, Matt. xxiv. 11, 12, and which happened not only in Judea and Palestine, but throughout Asia, 2 Tim. i. 15, and in all other places where they had embraced the gospel." Besides other circumstances tending in the same direction, "the great cause of this apostasy, of which the Scriptures take a more special notice, was the grievous persecutions they suffered in all places from their fellow-Jews, and from those heathens they had instigated against them. This by St. Paul is styled 'a great fight of afflictions,' against which he desires them to arm themselves, by faith and patience, and the consideration of the coming of their Lord, and by the example of that 'cloud of witnesses' which they had set before them. By St. Peter it is styled the 'fiery trial, which was come to try them,' 1 Pet. iv. 12, and by which they were 'in heaviness through manifold tribulations.' 1 Pet. i. 6. And against which St. James endeavors to strengthen them, by the consideration of the blessed fruits and glorious recompense their patience under them would produce, Jas. ch. i., and of the presence of their Lord, who would shortly come to rescue them, and give a happy issue of them, ch. v. By reason of which persecutions some began to use great compliances with the Jews, to avoid their rage; others, to fall away from the Christian faith, hoping perhaps that they might still obtain salvation in that religion, in which they expect-

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so

that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

ed to find it, before they embraced Christianity."—*Whitby*. ¶ *And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.* "No nation under heaven more deserved to be styled *the man of sin*, than did the Jewish nation, after the spirit of slumber and blindness was come upon them, Rom. xi. 8, for the rejection of the promised Messiah. If it be objected against the application of this character to the Jewish nation, that 'the man of sin' seems to relate to some single person, and therefore cannot be interpreted of a whole nation, especially if they act not under some head or other, I answer, that I have for this the authority of the prophet cited here, ver. 8, who saith, 'He shall smite the land (Chald., the sinners of the land) with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall consume the wicked one.' Which wicked one, whether we understand it, with the fathers, of Antichrist, or, with the Jews, of Armillus, that is, the Romans, or, with the Protestants, of the Papal polity, under the name of one must comprehend all his associates and followers, though they be many nations. So in the parable, Matt. xxii. 11, our Saviour represents the Jewish nation, from whom the kingdom of God was to be taken away, and who were to be cast out into outer darkness, ver. 13, by the man who had not on the wedding garment."—*Whitby*. "The phrase, 'the man of sin and child of perdition,' is plainly taken from that place, Isa. xi. 4, 'with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked one;' and the apostle makes it clear that he referreth to that place, by using the very words of the prophet, at ver. 8; 'Whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth.' The Jews put an emphasis upon that word in the prophet, 'the wicked one,' as it appeareth by the Chaldee paraphrast, who hath uttered it 'he shall destroy the wicked Roman;' and so the apostle puts an emphasis upon it,

and translates it the 'man of sin;' and in that Christ is introduced in the prophet, as having a special quarrel and vengeance against him, he is called 'the son of perdition,' or he that is so certainly and remarkably to be destroyed. It is true, this meaneth the Roman, as the Chaldee and our Protestant divines, by the warrant of John in the Revelation, do interpret it; but in the first place and sense it meaneth the Jewish nation, which proved Antichrist, as well as Rome ever did, and as far as Rome ever did, and before Rome ever did; and as long and longer than Rome hath yet done. As Jews and Rome joined in the murder of Christ, so are they joined in this character of Antichrist; but the Jews to be understood first, see ver. 7. 'The mystery of iniquity' was already working when the apostle wrote this epistle, which cannot possibly be understood but of the Jewish nation; and so it is explained again and again. 1 John ii. 18; iv. 3; 2 John, ver 7, &c."—*Lightfoot*.

4. *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God.* "Were it against God, it were most true, to the very letter; their scribes, in the temple of God itself, sitting and setting up their traditions above the commands of God. But how they exalted themselves against everything called God, or the magistracy, and those that were set over them, we may observe in such passages as these: 'They despise government,' 2 Pet. ii. 10; 'They despise dominion and speak evil of dignities,' Jude, ver. 8; and in their own stories to endless examples."—*Lightfoot*. ¶ *So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, &c.* "These words carry on the thought which has preceded. He sits in the temple of God, and openly declares himself to be God. We are not to imagine a person suddenly coming forward and claiming divine honors. This would be, not a mystery of iniquity, but an absurdity."—*Jowett*.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what

"Only the Jewish Sanhedrim, their priests, high priests, and doctors, or expounders of the law, sat in the temple of God, then properly so called; and there the high priest and the Sanhedrim took upon them the power of judging in capital causes. Thus they stoned Stephen; thus also they stoned James, the brother of our Lord, and others with him; and St. Paul persecuted the Christians even to death by their authority, Acts xxii. 4, 5; and thus they sat in the temple of God, as Gods. The scribes and Pharisees also showed themselves as God, by setting up their traditions above the commandments of God, pretending to dispense with them, and by so doing, saith our Saviour, to lay aside, reject, and to make void, the commandments of God, Matt. xv. 6; Mark vii. 8, 9, 10, 13, to establish their traditions." — *Whitby*.

5. *When I was yet with you I told you these things.* "Compare 1 Thess. iii. 4. This that I am telling you may sound strange. But do ye not remember that ye have heard it before from me by word of mouth, when I was yet with you? I do but hint to you now what I then told you more fully. Or we may trace the connection in a slightly different way. How is it that you have taken up these extravagant notions about the immediate coming of Christ? Have you forgotten what I told you about the manifestation of Antichrist and the interval which must precede? Compare 1 John ii. 21." — *Jowett*. "These are the words which seem to me to settle my interpretation of this chapter. For of the Jews and their opposing of themselves to the doctrine of Christianity and the professors of it, he told them in his first epistle, ch. ii. 15, 16; and when he was with them, the persecutions that both he and they suffered from them, Acts xvii. 5, 6, gave him a just occasion to speak both of their opposition to the

withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he

gospel, and of the deliverance they shortly might expect from such enraged persecutors; this being hinted for the encouragement of Christians, in most of his epistles; but that he should tell them anything of Mahomet, or of the Papal Antichrist, who was not then in being, or to be known then to the Thessalonians by any of the characters here mentioned, is not so easy to conceive." — *Whitby*.

6. *And now ye know what withholdeth, &c.* "The coming of Antichrist, like that of Christ, has its appointed time. Men were looking for the day of the Lord, but it was not yet; Antichrist must first come. They would look for Antichrist, but it was not yet. 'That which letteth' has been variously explained to mean the prayers of Christians, or the ministry of the apostle himself, or the Roman Empire, about the destruction of which the apostle expresses himself in dark and enigmatic terms; or, more generally, the purpose of God to delay its appearance." — *Jowett*.

7. *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.* "That is, the Jews have already imbibed their pernicious principles, that it is not lawful to pay tribute to Cesar, or to be subject to any other government under God. This mystery was also working by the false apostles, and deceitful workers of the Jews, causing some of the Gentile Christians to warp from the simplicity of the faith to the Jewish rites, to mix Judaism with Christianity, and so to turn from him that called them to another gospel. This mystery of iniquity, saith Dr. Lightfoot, cannot be understood, but of the Jewish nation, and so it is explained again and again by St. John, saying, 'This is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist cometh, so now are there many Antichrists; by which we know this is the last hour,' 1 John ii. 18. And ch. iv. 3, 'Every spirit that confesseth not Jesus Christ who is come

who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked

be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy

in the flesh, is not of God, and this is the spirit of Antichrist; 'this is the deceiver, and the Antichrist,' 2 John ver. 7. Here, therefore, is a plain account of the working of the *mystery of iniquity* in the false Christs and prophets of the Jewish nation, who also were the great incendiaries to and agents in the apostasy of that nation from the Roman government."—

*Whitby*. For the meaning of the word *mystery*, see note on Rom. xi. 25. "The 'mystery of iniquity' seems here to refer to some *hidden* or *concealed* depravity, some form of sin which was working secretly, and which had not yet fully developed itself."

—*Barnes*. ¶ *Only he who now letteth*, &c. Evidently the same which is described by a similar word in ver. 6, and there translated "withholdeth." Precisely who or what the apostle refers to, as keeping the "mystery of iniquity" in check, and hindering the premature revelation of "that Wicked," as *Lightfoot* remarks, "is of some obscurity." Commentators differ much in opinion. Absolute certainty may not be attainable at present. "There can be no doubt that there is reference to the same restraining power," as in ver. 6, "or the same power under the control of an individual; but what that was is not quite certain."—

*Barnes*. At the time when this epistle was written, Judea was under the political government of Rome; and the Jews were restrained, oftentimes very unwillingly, by the governing power. To this power, in some form, most commentators suppose the apostle refers. "My conjecture is this: 'he who now letteth,' that is, the Emperor Claudius, will let till he be taken away; that is, he will hinder the Jews from breaking out into an open rebellion in his time, they being so signally and particularly obliged by him, that they cannot for shame think of revolting from his government; for he had made two edicts in their favor. After his death, the affairs of the Jews,

saith Josephus, became worse and worse."—*Whitby*. "What was he that letteth, that the Antichrist among the Jews was not revealed sooner? I should divide this stake betwixt Claudius the Emperor (who, by his decree against the Jews in Rome, gave a check, by the appearance of his displeasure, to all the Jews elsewhere, that they durst not tyrannize against the gospel, whilst he lived, as they had done), and Paul himself, who by his incessant travelling in the gospel, and combating by the truth everywhere against the Jews, did keep down very much their delusions and apostasy, whilst he was at liberty and abroad; but when he was once laid up, then all went to ruin; as see Acts xx. 29; 2 Tim. i. 15."—*Lightfoot*.

8. *And then shall that Wicked be revealed*. "The lawless one."—*Conybeare*. "The lawless one being the man of sin, whose character and actions are described, ver. 4, the revelation of that person must mean, that he would no longer work *secretly*, but would openly show himself possessing the character and performing the actions of the man of sin, ver. 4, namely, after that which had restrained him was taken out of the way."—*MacKnight*. See note on ver. 3. ¶ *Whom the Lord shall consume*, &c. "That the apostle here refers to Isa. xi. 4, appears by his using the very words of that prophet, which run thus: 'He shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked one.' The earth to be smitten with the rod of his mouth must be the people or inhabitants of the land; or, as the Chaldee, the sinners of the earth, the unbelievers and wicked of Judea, to be consumed by that indignation and fire of the Lord. Mal. iv. 1."—*Whitby*. ¶ *And shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*. These words, with those which immediately precede, are cited by *Horne*, as an instance of Hebrew "gradational parallelism,"

with the brightness of his coming:

9 *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with

all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them

where the same idea which is embodied in the first member is repeated in the second in a more or less intensified form. Understood thus, we may suppose the apostle to indicate, in the first member, the sore tribulations which would befall those of whom he speaks, as the wicked or the lawless one, and in the second, their being absolutely cut off from the earth. "The day of the Lord's coming to destroy Jerusalem is styled by Joel, ii. 31, 'the great and bright day of the Lord;' and Mal. iv. 5, Behold, I send you Elias the prophet (that is, the Baptist, in the spirit and power of Elias, Luke i. 17), 'before the coming of the great and bright day of the Lord.' And that our Lord's coming in his day, after he had suffered and been rejected of that age or generation in which he suffered, should be as 'lightning shining from one end of the heaven to the other,' he expressly tells his disciples, Luke xvii. 22. And when this 'brightness' and 'appearance of the Son of man' was to happen, he sufficiently instructs them in these words: 'As the lightning shineth from the east to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be; for wherever the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together,' Luke xvii. 24, 37; which sensibly applies this matter to the destruction of the Jews by the Roman army, whose ensign was the eagle."—*Whitby*. I only add that the words ἐπιφάνεια, *brightness*, in the text, ἐπιφανής, *bright*, or *terrible* as in the common version, Joel ii. 31, ἐπιφανῆ, *bright* or *dreadful*, Mal. iv. 5, and φαίνεται, *shineth*, Matt. xxiv. 27, are all of similar character and signification; and that Matthew adds this limitation of time: "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. xxiv. 34.

9. *After the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.* "The apostle, having anticipated

the overthrow of Antichrist, returns to the description of him, whose presence will be, yea, and now is, according to the working of Satan, with all false power," &c.—*Jowett*. "This our Lord foretold, that, before his advent to destroy Jerusalem, there should appear 'false prophets and false Christs, who should deceive many,' Matt. xxiv. 11, who should show signs and wonders, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect,' ver. 24. Now that these 'false prophets,' ver. 11 and 24, were the same, we learn from St. Luke, who sums both up in one, chap. xxi. 8, and from the work of both, which was 'to deceive many.' That they were all to appear in the same age in which his disciples to whom he spake these words lived, is also evident from Christ's caution to them in respect of both: 'See to it, lest any man deceive you,' Matt. xxiv. 4; 'See to it; behold, I have foretold you all things,' Mark xiii. 23; Matt. xxiv. 25. It cannot, then, be doubted but that there were such persons as are here mentioned, which then arose among the Jews."—*Whitby*.

10. *And with all deceivableness, &c.* See note on ver. 9. ¶ *In them that perish.* See note on ver. 8. ¶ *Because they received not the love of the truth, &c.* "From these words some conceive that Antichrist, or the man of sin, must in profession be a Christian, because he is said not to receive the love of the truth only; but all the fathers and many others say, 'not to receive the love of the truth is not to receive the truth which is worthy to be loved,' and which would have taught them charity to those they persecuted, it being the same with 'not believing the truth,' ver. 12. And this emphatically belonged to those unbelieving Jews, to whom St. Paul speaks thus: 'It was necessary that the word of God should be first spoken to you; but since you thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of

that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be

damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the be-

eternal life, lo, we turn unto the Gentiles,' Acts xiii. 46, and to whom he applieth that of the prophet, 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I will work a work in your days, which you will in no wise believe,' ver. 41; see Acts xxviii. 27; Heb. iv. 2, 12; 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. And all the fathers which speak of Antichrist and the man of sin, not one of them excepted, declare that this and the two following verses belong to the unbelieving Jews; that he is thus to come with signs and wonders to deceive them; and that they who would not receive Christ, confirming his doctrine with true miracles, shall be deceived by the lying miracles of Antichrist. And if this be so, that these things are intended of the unbelieving Jews, they can agree in the primary import of them to them only."—*Whitby*.

11. *God shall send them strong delusion, &c.* "The agency of God is here distinctly recognized, in accordance with the uniform statements of the Scriptures respecting evil. Comp. Ex. vii. 13; ix. 12; x. 1, 20, 27; xi. 10; xiv. 8; Isa. xlv. 7."—*Barnes*. "God punishes sin *by* sin; therefore he sends to the lost ones, who through their fault did not allow the love for the truth to be stirred up in their hearts, a strong delusion, that they may believe a lie."—*Olshausen*. See notes on Rom. xi. 7, 8, where such judicial blindness is mentioned.

12. *That they all might be damned, &c.* "That all may be condemned."—*Macknight*, *Conybeare*, and many others. "The word *damned* we commonly apply now exclusively to future punishment, and it has a *harsher* signification than the original word. The Greek word κρίνω means to judge, determine, decide; and then to condemn. Rom. ii. 27; xiv. 22; James

iv. 11; John vii. 51; Luke xix. 22; Acts xiii. 27."—*Barnes*. This *damnation*, or condemnation, all the fathers understood to indicate the punishment which befell the unbelieving Jews in the apostolic age. See note on ver. 10. Thus, also, other writers of more recent date. "And this is the cause why God suffers mere magicians to deceive them by false miracles, and by that means to bring them to believe all kinds of falseness, false gods, false ways of worship, deceitful cheating, false miracles; that so filling up the measure of their obdurations, they may fall under condemnation, or be judged and discerned to be what they are, impenitent infidels, and accordingly remarkably punished."—*Hammond*. And this *remarkable punishment* is declared by this learned writer, in his note on ver. 8, to have been "the vengeance that befell the Jews by the Roman armies." To the same effect is the following: "Most exquisite and terrible will be the divine vengeance upon these people, that will give themselves up to diabolical arts, forged miracles, and lying prophecies, abandoned to the pernicious methods of fraud, violence, and injustice, and averse to all the clearest evidences of true and saving religion. For which irreclaimable corruptions, God, in just judgment, will let them loose to the prevalent delusions of false prophets and pretenders, so that they will embrace the most absurd and foolish things, and run headlong into such desperate courses as must naturally end in the utter condemnation and destruction of a people lost to all sense of truth and goodness, and devoted to falsehood and impiety. See all these predictions exactly fulfilled, with respect to the Jews, in Josephus of the Jewish Wars."—*Pyle*.

ginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ

himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

### CHAPTER III.

**F**INALLY, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the

13, 14. *Chosen you to salvation.* That is, to preservation from the calamities about to befall the Jewish nation. See note on ch. i. 7. Our Lord gave similar warning and encouragement to his disciples. "These be the days of vengeance that all things which are written may be fulfilled.—There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, *for your redemption draweth nigh.*—Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Luke xxi. 22, 25-28, 32. ¶ *Through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.* Steadfastness in the faith, and conformity to the Spirit of Christ, would be the means of their preservation in the hour of peril. See note on Matt. xxiv. 13. "(13.) The more of truth there is in all this, the more are we bound to bless and praise God for his goodness to you, brethren, that he hath been so favorable to you above others, as to appoint the gospel to be preached to you, and you to be called to the faith of Christ so early (so these being Jews at Thessalonica are said to have believed

before others, Eph. i. 12), and so to be taken out of that wicked generation by the preaching of the gospel, and that grace which is annexed to it, and by your receiving of the truth, by which means you are safe both from the apostasy, ver. 3, and the delusions, ver. 10, and from the destruction that shall shortly come upon the Jews and Gnostics, ver. 1, 8, 12. (14.) Unto which honor and advantages God hath, by our preaching, advanced you, that thereby ye might have your parts in all the glorious effects of Christ's power in his servants and over his enemies."—*Hammond.*

15-17. *Therefore, brethren stand fast, &c.* "Therefore, brethren, let me exhort you to stand fast, and strongly to retain the instructions which you have learned of us, whether by word or by our former letter.—And may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us in so surprising a manner, and given us by his gospel such a fund of everlasting consolation, and such good hope through his overflowing grace, when without it we could not have any glimmering of hope or prospect of comfort forever: may he, I say, by the rich communication of his love and mercy, comfort your hearts, and may he strengthen and confirm you, making you ready for every good word and work, that his name may be glorified, and your present satisfaction and future reward may abound."—*Doddridge.*

Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you:

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil.

### CHAPTER III.

1. *Finally, brethren, pray for us.* See note on 2 Cor. i. 11. ¶ *That the word of the Lord.* The gospel, as proclaimed by our Lord and his apostles. ¶ *May have free course, &c.* Or, *run*, as in the margin. Paul desired the prayers of his brethren that all obstructions to the preaching of the gospel might be removed, so that it might be universally known and honored. ¶ *Even as it is with you.* That is, even as you accept and honor it.

2. *And that we may be delivered, &c.* That is, from the opposition of unbelievers and ungodly men. Such opposition, chiefly instigated by unbelieving Jews, Paul encountered wherever he preached. He probably has special reference here to what he suffered at Corinth, where this epistle was written. See Acts xviii. 5, 6, 12. ¶ *For all men have not faith.* See note on Rom. x. 16. Those who have not faith in the gospel cannot be trusted as friends; but opposition, and abuse, and persecution are to be expected from them by the advocates of the gospel.

3. *But the Lord is faithful, &c.* "Though men cannot be trusted, God is faithful to his promises and his purposes. He may always be confided in; and when men are unbelieving, perverse, unkind, and disposed to do us wrong, we may go to him, and we shall always find in him one in whom we may confide."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Who shall stablish you.* Make you steadfast in the faith. ¶ *And keep you from evil.* See note on John xvii. 15.

4. *And we have confidence, &c.* This is an expression of confidence in

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our

the Lord, that the brethren at Thessalonica would live and act as Christians, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, would "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith" they were "called," Eph. iv. 1, notwithstanding all the opposition of unbelievers.

5. *The patient waiting for Christ.* Or, *the patience of Christ*, as in the margin. "The marginal reading is in accordance with the Greek, and seems best to express the apostle's meaning. The prayer of the apostle was, that they might have the love of God in their hearts, and 'the patience of Christ;' that is, the same patience which Christ evinced in his trials. They were then suffering affliction and persecution. They needed patience, that they might endure their trials in a proper manner. It was natural for the apostle to refer them to the Saviour, the great example of patience, and to pray that they might have the same which he had. That it does not mean that they were to wait patiently for the *appearing* of Christ, as our translation seems to imply, is quite clear, because the apostle had just been showing them that he would *not* appear until after a long series of events had occurred."—*Barnes*. In one sense, indeed, the "series of events" was *long*; and the brethren were not to be agitated, under the expectation that "the day of Christ" was immediately "at hand;" but in another sense it was *short*: for the "coming" happened within less than twenty years after this epistle was written.

6. *That ye withdraw yourselves.* Withdraw from the fellowship of such; have no intercourse with them which



Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you :

9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with

---

can be construed into an approval of their conduct. See note on 1 Cor. v. 11. The character and effect of such withdrawal of fellowship are well stated thus: "We cease to have fellowship with him. We do not regard him any longer as a Christian brother. We separate from him. We do not seek to affect him in any other respect; we do not injure his name or standing as a man, or hold him up to reprobation; we do not follow him with denunciation or a spirit of revenge; we simply cease to recognize him as a Christian brother when he shows that he is no longer worthy to be regarded as such."—*Barnes*. ¶ *From every brother that walketh disorderly*. Any one who violates the rules of the gospel, or conducts in a manner inconsistent with the spirit and the precepts of our Lord, may be said to *walk disorderly*; and from all such, the sincere Christian should *withdraw* himself. But, from what follows, the apostle seems to refer chiefly to a single form of disorderly conduct, namely, idleness. Some of the brethren at Thessalonica were thus disorderly, and had been mildly rebuked in 1 Thess. iv. 11. It is supposed that they had become even more idle under the impression that the "day of the Lord" was immediately at hand, and that all labor to provide for future wants was useless. To such the apostle here administers a more energetic rebuke, and pro-

---

nounces them to be unworthy to associate with honest and industrious Christians.

7. *We behaved not ourselves disorderly*. I was not idle, but diligent both in preaching and in manual labor, ver. 8.

8. *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought*. See notes on Acts xviii. 3; xx. 34; 1 Cor. ix. 12, 15.

9. *Not because we have not power*. See notes on 1 Cor. ix. 4–18.

10. *If any would not work, neither should he eat*. "That is, at the public expense. They should not be supported by the church."—*Barnes*. No man has a right to claim assistance from others, unless he use his utmost exertions to provide for his own wants. This is an old proverb, universally granted to be true.

11. *Busy-bodies*. Busy in the affairs of others, to the neglect of their own. An idle man is peculiarly exposed to this form of temptation. He who properly attends to his "own business," 1 Thess. iv. 11, will not be disposed to interfere with the business of others, except to help those who may need assistance.

12. *Now them that are such, we command, &c.* See note on 1 Thess. iv. 11. The apostle, once more, and with even greater solemnity, repeats his admonition that the brethren should be diligent in business, that they might eat the bread of honesty.

quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

16 Now the Lord of peace

himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

¶ The second epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

13. *Be not weary in well doing.* Or, *faint not*, as in the margin. Be not disheartened, even though many professed Christians conduct in such an unchristian manner. Rather give them an example of diligence to imitate.

14. *Note that man.* Set a mark upon him, by withdrawing your fellowship. ¶ *Have no company with him.* See note on ver. 6.

15. *Yet count him not as an enemy, &c.* "The meaning is, hold no intercourse with the man, but do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."—*Jowett*. God loves his children while he chastises them, and chastises them because he loves them. Heb. xii. 5-13. His children should cherish a similar spirit towards each other.

16. *Now the Lord of peace, &c.* See note on Rom. xv. 33.

17. *The salutation of me Paul, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. xvi. 21. See also, Gal. vi. 11; Philemon, ver. 19. "Paul generally added a brief sentence, written with his own hand, that those whom he addressed might know his letters to be genuine."—*Rosenmüller*. "This conclusion wherein I salute you, I write with mine own hand; and so it is my custom to do in all my epistles."—*Hammond*.

18. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* See notes on Rom. xvi. 20, 24.

The subscription indicates that this epistle was written at Athens. Commentators generally suppose it was written at Corinth; and all agree that the subscription was not written by the apostle, and that it has no authority.

# FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

## CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment

## CHAPTER I.

Almost all which is now known of Timothy, to whom this epistle is addressed, is derived from the New Testament. He was born probably at Lystra, and was son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. He was carefully instructed in the Jewish Scriptures by his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois, 2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 15; and it is not unlikely that he heard Paul preach at his first visit to Lystra, Acts xiv. 6, inasmuch as at the second visit, Acts xvi. 1-3, the apostle found him sufficiently sound in the faith to become a fit associate in the Christian ministry; and it is manifest that he was converted by Paul himself, because he is styled "my own son in the faith," ver. 2. "It may be thought that St. Paul's conduct in circumcising Timothy was inconsistent with the principle and practice he maintained at Jerusalem when he refused to circumcise Titus. Gal. ii. 3. But the two cases were entirely different. Then there was an attempt to enforce circumcision as necessary to salvation; now it was performed as a voluntary act, and simply on prudential grounds. Those who insisted on the ceremony in the case of Titus were Christians, who were endeavoring to burden the gospel with the yoke of the law; those for whose sakes Timothy became obedient to one provision of the law were Jews, whom it was desirable not to provoke, that they might more easily be

of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, *which is our hope*;

2 Unto Timothy, *my own son in the faith*: Grace, mercy, and

delivered from bondage. By conceding in the present case, prejudice was conciliated and the gospel furthered; the results of yielding in the former case would have been disastrous, and perhaps ruinous, to the cause of pure Christianity."—*Howson*. From the time of his circumcision, Timothy became the devoted follower and assistant of Paul. See Acts xvi. 1-9; xvii. 14; xviii. 5; xix. 22. "Indeed, there seems to have been no one of his fellow-laborers to whom he was so warmly attached. See 1 Tim. i. 2, 18; 2 Tim. i. 2; ii. 1; 1 Cor. iv. 17, where he calls him 'his own son,' and 'his beloved son;' 2 Tim. i. 4, where he expresses his earnest desire to see him, and makes a reference to the tears which Timothy shed at parting from him; 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11, where he bespeaks for him a kind reception among the Corinthians; 1 Cor. xvi. 10; Rom. xvi. 21; 1 Thess. iii. 2, and especially ii. 19, 20, where he speaks of his fidelity, of his usefulness to him in his labors, and of the interest which he took in the churches which the apostle had established."—*Barnes*. Little is known concerning Timothy, after the death of Paul. There is a tradition, but no historical certainty, that he was the presiding officer of the church at Ephesus, that he suffered martyrdom and was buried there, and that his bones were afterwards removed to Constantinople. One of the most diligent students of Paul's apostolical labors supposes that he returned from Spain to

peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went

Ephesus, A. D. 66, where "he found that the predictions which he long ago uttered to the Ephesian presbyters were already receiving their fulfilment." But he could not remain to combat the errors which had crept into the church, as he was called to Macedonia. He left Timothy at Ephesus to act in his stead; and for his guidance addressed to him this First Epistle, soon after departing to Macedonia. The errors referred to are thus stated: "Heretical teachers had arisen in the very bosom of the church, and were leading away the believers after themselves. Hymenæus and Philetus were sowing, in a congenial soil, the seed which was destined in another century to bear so ripe a crop of error. The East and West were infusing their several elements of poison into the pure cup of gospel truth. In Asia Minor, as at Alexandria, Hellenic philosophy did not refuse to blend with Oriental theosophy; the Jewish superstitions of the Kabbala, and the wild speculations of the Persian Magi, were combined with the Greek craving for an enlightened and esoteric religion. The outward forms of superstition were ready for the vulgar multitude; the interpretation was confined to the aristocracy of knowledge, the self-styled Gnostics (1 Tim. vi. 20); and we see the tendencies at work among the latter, when we learn that, like their prototypes at Corinth, they denied the future resurrection of the dead, and taught that the only true resurrection was that which took place when the soul awoke from the death of ignorance to the life of knowledge. We recognize already the germ of those heresies which convulsed the church in the succeeding century, and we may imagine the grief and indignation aroused in the breast of St. Paul, when he found the extent of the evil, and the number of Christian converts already infected by the spreading plague." — *Conybeare*. To provide an antidote against such evils was one principal ob-

ject of this epistle. In the epistles to Timothy and Titus are also contained instructions concerning the work of the ministry, of the highest importance not only to them, but to their successors in all ages and in all places.

1. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ*. See note on Rom. i. 1. ¶ *By the commandment of God, our Saviour*. See note on 1 Cor. i. 1. "The Father sent the Son, to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John iv. 14; yet the actual author and bestower of the gracious gift is "the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe," ch. iv. 10. ¶ *And Lord Jesus Christ*. See notes on Gal. i. 11, 12. ¶ *Which is our hope*. See note on Col. i. 27.

2. *My own son in the faith*. Timothy would seem to have been converted to the true faith by the personal ministry of Paul, who cherished for him a parental affection. See note on 1 Cor. iv. 15. ¶ *Grace, mercy, &c*. See note on Rom. i. 7.

3. *As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, &c*. It appears that Paul and his favorite disciple had labored together at Ephesus. For what purpose Timothy was requested to remain there, when the apostle departed into Macedonia, appears by what follows. ¶ *That thou mightest charge some*. That is, some who sustained the character of Christian teachers, probably both Jews and Gentiles; for of the errors afterwards mentioned, some were peculiar to each class. But the language indicates that the infection of error had not pervaded the whole body, because the admonition is specially addressed to some. ¶ *That they teach no other doctrine*. That is, that they teach no doctrine contrary to that which had already been taught by Paul. He was unwilling that the pure gospel should be adulterated by Jewish fables or bondage to the law, on the one hand, or by Gentile philosophy, or "science falsely so called," ch. vi. 20, on the

into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than

other. The preaching of any such "other gospel," he forbade and denounced. See notes on Gal. i. 6-9.

4. *Neither give heed to fables.* "The word rendered *fable* means properly speech or discourse, and then fable or fiction, or a mystic discourse. Such things abounded among the Greeks as well as the Jews, but it is probable that the latter here are particularly intended. These were composed of frivolous and unfounded stories, which they regarded as of great importance, and which they seem to have desired to incorporate with the teachings of Christianity." — *Barnes*. Others understand the apostle to include the fables current among the Gentiles. He would have the truth kept free from all admixture of error, from whatever source derived. ¶ *And endless genealogies.* "St. Paul, in this verse and afterwards, speaks particularly against that attention which the Jews paid to genealogies. It was carried among them to a very great height. Jerome, somewhere speaking on this subject, says, 'they were as well acquainted with genealogies from Adam to Zerubabel, as with their own names.' This attention to genealogies was at first necessary in ascertaining the descent of Christ, and the completion of the prophecies. But it afterward tended only to draw the mind from more useful pursuits. The Jewish converts were sometimes studious to claim kindred with Christ. To this also the apostle might perhaps allude." — *Gilpin*. Others understand the apostle to refer to Grecian mythology. "And warn thy flock not to heed those fabulous pedigrees of the gods, which, under the name of Æons, the Gnostics talk so much of, and so bring in many perplexed disputes, rather than instruct men in the way of salvation under the gospel, or of Christian doctrine in mat-

godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

ters belonging to God." — *Hammond*.

¶ *Which minister questions, &c.* They are merely exercises of the mind, without improving the heart. They beget contention, instead of contributing to "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. iv. 3. ¶ *So do.* These words are properly supplied by the translators, to complete the sentence.

5. *Now the end of the commandment.* The object, or the designed effect, of the command. ¶ *Is charity.* Or, *love*. See note on 1 Cor. xiii. 1. When the Pharisees demanded of our Lord, "Which is the great commandment in the law," he replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, — Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. xxii. 36-40. See also Rom. xiii. 8-10. Love to God and love to man are what the divine law requires, and what it will finally produce. Matt. v. 17, 18. Whether, by *commandment*, the apostle refers to the divine law generally, or whether there be a special reference to the command contained in his charge to Timothy, ver. 3, the result is the same; namely, that the production of pure love in the human heart is the important object sought. ¶ *Out of a pure heart.* The same spirit which fills the heart with love, purifies it from evil passions. ¶ *And of a good conscience.* In the same degree that the heart is purified from evil and pervaded by love, all duties toward God and toward men will be cheerfully performed, and the conscience to the same extent will be void of offence. Acts xxiv. 16. ¶ *And of faith unfeigned.* "Undissembled confidence in God. How can any one have love to him who has no confidence

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully:

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedi-

ent, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man-slayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

in him? Can we exercise love to a professed friend in whom we have no confidence?" — *Barnes*.

6. *From which some having swerved, &c.* Or, *not aiming at*, as in the margin. *Which*, being in the plural form in the original, seems to refer to charity, and the other Christian graces, rather than to the *commandment* which is designed to produce them. ¶ *Vain janglings*. "Vain talk." — *Robinson*. Not necessarily quarrelsome or contentious; but unprofitable, fruitless.

7. *Teachers of the law*. The reference here seems to be to the Judaizing teachers, rather than to the Grecian philosophers. ¶ *Understanding neither what they say, &c.* They do not understand the true nature and object of the law which they desire and profess to teach. See ch. vi. 3-5.

8. *The law is good, &c.* See note on Rom. vii. 12. ¶ *If a man use it lawfully*. "The law is given to excellent purpose, if we make such use of it as we ought, not seeking to be justified by the observation thereof, but to be directed by it in our obedience, as a perfect rule of life, and to be brought by it to Christ. Gal. iii. 24." — *Assemb. Annot.*

9, 10. *The law is not made for a righteous man, but, &c.* "The law of Moses being given as a rule of life to the good as well as the bad, the apostle's meaning doubtless is, that it was given, not for the purpose of justifying the most righteous men that ever lived, but for restraining the wicked by its threatenings and punishments. This will appear still more clearly, if

the doctrine of the Judaizers is considered. They affirmed, that obedience to the law of Moses was the only way in which men could be saved; understanding by *obedience* one's doing the things which that law enjoined; or, in case of failure, his having recourse to the atonement which it prescribed for the offence. But to overturn this corrupt doctrine, the apostle here declared that the law of Moses was not given for the purpose of justifying any man, not even the righteous, but merely for restraining the lawless and disorderly by its threatenings and punishments; so that it was not a religious institution, but a mere municipal law, whereby God, as King of the Jews, governed them in Canaan, as his people or subjects." — *Macknight*. Others interpret differently. "Some suppose that the law here refers to the ceremonial laws of Moses (*Clarke, Rosenmüller, Abbott*); others to the denunciatory part of the law (*Doddridge and Bloomfield*); and others that it means that the chief purpose of the law was to restrain the wicked. The meaning seems to be, that the purpose of the law was not to fetter and perplex those who were righteous, and who aimed to do their duty, and to please God. It was not intended to produce a spirit of servitude and bondage. As the Jews interpreted it, it did this, and this interpretation appears to have been adopted by the teachers at Ephesus, to whom Paul refers. The whole tendency of their teaching was to bring the soul into a state of bondage, and to make relig-

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me,

ion a condition of servitude. Paul teaches, on the other hand, that religion was a condition of freedom, and that the main purpose of the law was not to fetter the minds of the righteous by numberless observances and minute regulations, but that it was to restrain the wicked from sin. This is the case with all law. No good man feels himself fettered and manacled by wholesome laws, nor does he feel that the purpose of law is to reduce him to a state of servitude. It is only the wicked who have this feeling; and in this sense the law is *made* for a man who intends to do wrong." — *Barnes*. When that love, which is the ultimate object of the law, pervades the heart, there remains no sense of bondage, but the law requires only that service which the heart delights to render; it is, then, a "perfect law of liberty;" for "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Jas. i. 25; 2 Cor. iii. 17. But to the "lawless and disobedient," and the various classes of sinners named in these two verses, the law is antagonistical, forbidding the indulgence of unholy lusts and passions, and denouncing "a just recompense of reward" for "every transgression and disobedience." Heb. ii. 2. See notes on Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

11. According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Whatever vice or immorality is forbidden by the law, is even more strictly prohibited by the gospel. The law deals with acts; the gospel with the thoughts and passions of the heart, from which those acts flow. For example: the law prohibits adultery, the gospel denounces lust; the law prohibits murder, the gospel denounces hatred as a murderous and therefore sinful passion. See notes on Matt. v. 21, 22, 27, 28; 1 John iii. 15. "They who preach the gospel, then, should be regarded as arrayed against the law, and Paul says that

for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mer-

they who preached the gospel aright really stated the true principles of the law. This he evidently intends should bear against the false teachers who professed to explain the law of Moses. He means here that if a man wished to explain the law, the best explanation would be found in that gospel which it was his office to publish." — *Barnes*.

12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, &c. Paul was converted from a violent persecutor, to a zealous apostle, by the immediate agency of the Lord Jesus. Acts xxvi. 9-20. Although the ministry to which he was devoted was attended by severe toil, and notwithstanding the sharp persecution by his enemies put his life in constant peril, yet he rejoiced that he was accounted worthy to labor and to suffer in such a holy cause. See Rom. v. 3-5. Like the Twelve, he accounted it a privilege to suffer for Christ's sake. Acts v. 41; 2 Cor. xii. 10. ¶ *Who hath enabled me.* "Who hath given me ability or strength for this service. The apostle traced to the Lord Jesus the fact that he was in the ministry at all, and all the ability which he had to perform the duties of that holy office." — *Barnes*. But while he acknowledged the Lord Jesus Christ as the medium through whom divine gifts were communicated, he always recognized the Father as the original author and giver of all blessings. See notes on 1 Cor. xv. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 9.

13. Who was before a blasphemer. Namely, a blasphemer of Jesus Christ, not of God. Not only was he a blasphemer or open reviler of Christ, but he was active in compelling others to blaspheme. Acts xxvi. 11. ¶ *Persecutor and injurious.* See Acts ix. 1, 2; xxii. 4; xxvi. 9-11; 1 Cor. xv. 9. ¶ *But I obtained mercy because, &c.* "The ignorance and unbelief of Paul were not such excuses for what he did that they would wholly free him from

cy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the

world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

blame, nor did he regard them as such, for what he did was with a violent and wicked spirit, but they were mitigating circumstances. They served to modify his guilt, and were among the reasons why God had mercy on him. What is said here, therefore, accords with what the Saviour said in his prayer for his murderers: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'—*Barnes*. Paul verily thought he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Acts xxvi. 9. He afterwards regretted his opposition and persecution, and acknowledged himself to be "not meet to be called an apostle," 1 Cor. xv. 9; but at the time he acted in "good conscience," believing that he was doing God service. See John xvi. 2; and note on Acts xxiii. 1.

14. *The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant.* The apostle always ascribed his conversion, his call to the apostleship, the spiritual gifts which made his apostleship effectual, and his hope of future good on earth and final salvation, to the grace of God. See note on 1 Cor. xv. 10.

15. *Worthy of all acceptation.* "Worthy to be embraced or believed by all. This is so, because (1.) All are sinners and need a Saviour. All, therefore, ought to welcome a doctrine which shows them how they may be saved. (2.) Because Christ died for all. If he had died for only a part of the race, and could save only a part, it could not be said with any propriety that the doctrine was worthy of the acceptance of 'all.' If that were so, what had it to do with *all*? How could all be interested in it or benefited by it?"—*Barnes*. ¶ *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save*

*sinners.* This was the great object of his mission, as announced by the heavenly messenger. See note on Matt. i. 21. He repeatedly declared that he came into the world for this very purpose. Matt. ix. 13; Luke xix. 10; John iii. 16, 17; xii. 32. His apostles bore testimony to the same fact. Rom. v. 6-8; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9; 1 John iv. 9-14. ¶ *Of whom I am chief.* Paul frequently refers to his former hostility to Christ as a crime to be deplored and sincerely lamented, styling himself "not meet to be called an apostle," and "less than the least of all saints." See notes on 1 Cor. xv. 9; Eph. iii. 8. And if such a sinner as he acknowledged himself to be, could be saved by the grace of God through the Lord Jesus Christ, he did not doubt that the same grace would be effectual to the salvation of all men. If the "chief" of sinners might be saved, there was hope for all others. See notes on Acts iii. 25, 26.

16. *Howbeit for this cause, &c.* "That is, this was *one* of the causes, or this was a leading reason. We are not to suppose that this was the only one. God had other ends to answer by his conversion than this, but this was one of the designs why he was pardoned, that there might be for all ages a permanent proof that sins of the deepest dye might be forgiven. It was well to have one such example at the outset, that a doubt might never arise about the possibility of forgiving great transgressors."—*Barnes*. "God had mercy on my ignorance, and shed his grace upon me, making me an example of that great truth, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."—*Gilpin*. ¶ *For a pattern, &c.*



17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck:

20 Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

## CHAPTER II.

**I** EXHORT therefore that, first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may

Others might be encouraged by such an example of the triumph of grace over sin. See note on v. 15. "It settled the question forever, that the greatest sinners might be pardoned; for as he was 'the chief of sinners,' it proved that a case could not occur which was beyond the possibility of mercy." — *Barnes*.

17. *Now unto the King eternal, &c.* This ascription of praise is an outburst of gratitude from the apostle's heart, in view of the abounding grace of God, displayed in the salvation of sinners. A similar doxology occurs in Rom. xi. 33-36. ¶ *Immortal*. Rather, *incorruptible*, as the word *αθάρατος*, is translated in all the other places where it occurs. Rom i. 23; 1 Cor. ix. 25; xv. 52; 1 Pet. i. 4, 23; iii. 4. ¶ *Invisible*. See ch. vi. 16; John i. 18. ¶ *The only wise God*. See Rom xvi. 27. The word *wise* is omitted by some critics, while its genuineness is defended by others. The sense remains much the same, whether the word be retained or not; in one case, the ascription is to the only wise God, and in the other to the only actual God.

18. *According to the prophecies, &c.* Generally understood to refer to prophetic utterances in the church, concerning the destination of Timothy to the work of the ministry. Compare Acts xiii. 1-3. ¶ *That thou by them*. "By those prophecies. That is, that being stimulated and excited by those predictions and hopes, you might be led to fidelity and usefulness." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Mightest war a good warfare*.

"A military metaphor employed in allusion to the courage and vigilance requisite to his office." — *Bloomfield*. A similar exhortation is found in ch. vi. 12, and 2 Tim. ii. 3; and, in like manner, private Christians are frequently represented as soldiers engaged in warfare. 2 Cor. x. 4; Eph. vi. 11-17.

19. *Holding faith*. Either "holding fast the form of sound words," in which the gospel had been communicated to him, 2 Tim. i. 13, or being faithful to his leader, the captain of his salvation. ¶ *And a good conscience*. See note on Acts xxiv. 16.

20. *Hymeneus*. See 2 Tim. ii. 17. ¶ *Alexander*. See 2 Tim. iv. 14. ¶ *Whom I have delivered unto Satan*. See note on 1 Cor. v. 5. "Whom by the censures of the church I delivered unto Satan's power, to chasten and afflict them, that they may reform and recover from that very ill course in which they are, both for faith and manners." — *Hammond*.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *First of all*. Chiefly, or principally. "It does not mean that this was the first thing in public worship, in the order of time, but that it was to be regarded as a duty of primary importance. The duty of praying for the salvation of the whole world was not to be regarded as a subordinate and secondary thing." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*. All these words are ex-

lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this *is* good and accept-

pressive of prayer in some of its forms. "We may understand (1.) deprecations of evil; (2.) supplications for good; (3.) intercessions for others; (4.) grateful acknowledgments to the divine goodness for preservation or prosperity, a view supported by the authority of St. Augustin."—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *For all men*. This phrase should be understood in its natural and unrestricted sense. "Prayers should be made for all men, for all need the grace and mercy of God; thanks should be rendered for all, for all may be saved. Does not this direction imply that Christ died for all mankind? How could we give thanks in their behalf, if there were no mercy for them, and no way had been provided by which they could be saved?"—*Barnes*. In the subsequent verses, reasons are assigned why it is proper to pray for all men. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ prayed, and thus should his disciples pray. See notes on John xvii. 9, 20, 21.

2. *For kings and for all that are in authority*. Those who bear rule should be special subjects of prayer, because the welfare of the people is involved in their just administration of government, as is suggested in the words which follow. For another reason why so much regard should be cherished for rulers as to prompt special prayer for their guidance and protection, see notes on Rom. xiii. 1-7. ¶ *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, &c.* If the hearts of rulers were favorably disposed towards the gospel, its professors might hope to live in peace and to practise those duties which it enjoins. The general idea has been briefly expressed thus: "I exhort you, first, in your religious assemblies, to pray for all mankind; and, among them, for the princes under whose government you live, that you may be allowed the profession of your religion."—*Gilpin*. It should not be forgotten that our prayers should be offered in faith. See ver. 8.

able in the sight of God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to

3. *For this is good and acceptable, &c.* "That is, it is good and acceptable to God that we should pray for all men. The reason is, that he desires their salvation, and hence it is agreeable to him that we should pray for it. If there were no provision made for their salvation, or if he was unwilling that they should be saved, it could not be agreeable to him that we should offer prayer for them"—*Barnes*. Believing that God is the universal Father, and that he desires the highest welfare of all his children, we may well believe also that he approves the spirit which prompts us to pray for the salvation of "all men."

4. *Who will have all men to be saved.* "Who earnestly desires the good of all mankind, and useth all powerful means to bring them to reform their former wicked lives, and now to entertain the gospel."—*Hammond*. "That this language is to be understood in its broadest sense, is evident from the negative equivalent in 2 Pet. iii. 9, 'not willing that any should perish.'"—*Grotius*. "It is far from being my design, in any of these notes, to enter deep into controversy, but I must confess I have never been satisfied with that interpretation which explains *all men* here, merely as signifying *some* of all sorts and conditions of men."—*Doddridge*. "The apostle reasons thus: God will have all men to be saved, because he is the God of all, the common father, creator, governor, and preserver of all men; now, thus he is the God of all men in particular; and so this argument must show he would have all men in particular be saved. For, as the apostle argues for God's readiness to justify the Gentiles by faith, as freely as the Jews, by asking, 'Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles?' Rom. iii. 29, and answering that there is no difference betwixt them, 'the same God being rich unto all that call upon him,' Rom. x. 12; so may we argue in this case, by a like inquiry,

be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

5 For *there is* one God, and

one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

6 Who gave himself a ran-

'Is he the God of a small remnant of the Jews and Gentiles only? Is he not the God and Saviour of them all?' ch. iv. 10." — *Whitby*. "Meaning all persons without exception." — *Bloomfield*. "Because he wills the salvation of all men, therefore he wills that all men should be prayed for. In the face of such a declaration, how can any Christian soul suppose that God ever unconditionally and eternally reprobated any man! Those who can believe so, one would suppose, can have little acquaintance either with the nature of God or the bowels of Christ." — *Clarke*. Notwithstanding these distinct and emphatic assertions that God truly wills the salvation of all men without exception, yet all the writers here cited are understood to have believed that many men will never be saved. It has been supposed that while God *desires*, he does not *purpose*, the salvation of all. The distinction is thus stated: "This one God will have all men to be saved, that is, he desires not the death or destruction of any, Ezek. xxxiii. 11, but the welfare and salvation of all. Not that he hath decreed the salvation of all, for then all men would be saved; but he hath a good will to the salvation of all, and none perish, but it is their own fault, Matt. xxiii. 37." — *Henry*. "That is, it is in accordance with his nature, his feelings, his desires. — The word *will* cannot be taken here in the absolute sense, denoting a decree like that by which he willed the creation of the world, for then it would certainly be done." — *Barnes*. But what God has done for the salvation of all would seem to indicate somewhat more than a bare willingness or inoperative desire for the accomplishment of that object. "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John iv. 14; and the Son "gave himself a ransom for all," ver. 6, and submitted to "taste death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. Does not this betoken a fixed purpose, "accord-

ing to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself?" Eph. i. 9. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. It is undoubtedly true that the word *θέλει*, here translated *will*, ordinarily expresses choice or desire, rather than determination; though Macknight translates this passage, "who *commandeth* all men to be saved," justifying the translation by the remark that "the will of a superior declared is the same as a command," and quoting several passages where he says this word is so used. But however this be, it is difficult to imagine any reason why the choice or desire of God should fail of accomplishment. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Dan. iv. 35, and he hath said, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. xlv. 9, 10. He has no rival in the universe, to thwart his desires. Will he then disappoint himself? The idea that God has a *will of purpose* contrary or in opposition to his *will of desire*, or, in other words, that he has deliberately and voluntarily determined to prevent the accomplishment of his own desire, seems to me absolutely absurd. It is utterly inconceivable that a God of infinite wisdom and power should do that which he does not choose to do, and doom to endless sin and misery any of his children whom he truly desires to crown with holiness and happiness. It is said, to be sure, that the highest good of the universe demands the endless misery of a part of mankind; and therefore that the purpose of God to inflict such misery is perfectly consistent with his infinite benevolence, which

dom for all, to be testified in due time.

prompts him to desire the salvation of all. Thus: "Doubtless, God is absolutely and perfectly benevolent; but such benevolence seeks the greatest happiness of the system, not of any individual, unless the happiness of that individual be consistent with the greatest happiness of the system. There is no difficulty, therefore, in conceiving that however the first cause of all things is infinitely benevolent, he should bring mankind into existence, though he never intended to make them all finally happy. He might in perfect consistence with infinite benevolence bring them into existence, intending that some of them should suffer that endless punishment which they should deserve, and thereby contribute to the greatest happiness of the system. And if such a punishment be subservient to the greatest happiness of the system, infinite benevolence not only admits of it, but requires it; nor would God be infinitely benevolent, if he should save all men."—*Edwards vs. Chauncy*, p. 148. That is to say, in fewer words, the infinite benevolence of God, which prompts the desire for the salvation of all men, requires him to withhold salvation from "some of them," because "the greatest happiness" of all is promoted by the endless misery of a part. To state this proposition plainly is a sufficient refutation of it, without argument. But the proposition, whether true or false, does not relieve the absurdity before named, it only changes its form; for it is no less absurd to suppose that God truly desires to save those whom he has doomed to endless misery, because such misery would promote the "greatest happiness" of all, than it is to suppose that he would doom to endless sin and misery any of his children whom he truly desires to bless with holiness and happiness. ¶ *And to come unto the knowledge of the truth.* "These words suggest the means of salvation, namely, by coming to a full knowledge and entire recognition of the truth of the gospel."—*Bloomfield*. Our Lord and his apostles fre-

7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I

quently mention knowledge of the truth, or faith in it, as the medium through which salvation is bestowed, — whether present or final, partial or entire. See notes on ch. iv. 10; John iii. 15; xvii. 17.

5. *For there is one God.* "This is a reason for offering prayer for all men, and for the declaration, ver. 4, that God desires that all men should be saved. The reason is founded in the fact that he is the common Father of all the race, and that he must have the same desire for the welfare of all his children."—*Barnes*. If his power be commensurate with his affection, their final welfare is secure. ¶ *And one mediator between God and men.* "This also is given as a reason why prayer should be offered for all, and a proof that God desires their salvation. The argument is, that there is the same mediator between God and all men. He is not the mediator between God and a part of the human race, but between God and men, implying that he desired the salvation of the race. Whatever love there was in giving the mediator at all, was love for all the race; whatever can be argued from that about the interest which God has in man, is proof of his interest in the race at large."—*Barnes*. ¶ *The man Christ Jesus.* However highly exalted in other respects our Lord may have been, he was clothed with a mortal body, and in that respect was a man. See note on Matt. iv. 1-11. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Heb. ii. 14, 16. This implies what is elsewhere asserted, that though he was a man he was also more than a man. See note on John iii. 13. "Though the union of the divine nature with the human qualified Christ for the office of mediator, yet I think this plainly shows that it is in his human nature we are to consider him as discharging it."—*Doddridge*.

speak the truth in Christ, and lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

8 I will therefore that men

pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.

9 In like manner also, that

6. *Who gave himself a ransom for all.* Equivalent to the testimony that he "tasted death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. "This, also, is stated as a reason why prayer should be offered for all, and a proof that God desires the salvation of all. The argument is, that, as Christ died for all, it is proper to pray for all, and that the fact that he died for all is a proof that God desired the salvation of all. Whatever proof of his desire for their salvation can be derived from this, in relation to *any* of the race, is proof in relation to *all*." — *Barnes*. In regard to the character of the ransom, and the atonement or reconciliation which it was designed to effect, see notes on 1 Cor. vi. 20; 2 Cor. v. 13-20. ¶ *To be testified in due time.* Or, *a testimony*, as in the margin. "Who voluntarily, John x. 18, gave himself a ransom, not for the Jews only, but for all. Of which doctrine, the publication and proof is now made in its proper season; so that, since Christ gave himself for all, it is certainly the will of God that we should pray for all. — The proper season for publishing and proving that Christ gave himself a ransom for all, was doubtless after he had actually died for that purpose." — *Macknight*.

7. *Whereunto.* Unto which. Unto the bearing of this testimony among the Gentiles, that they may know the truth, and enter into the present enjoyment of salvation. Ch. iv. 10. ¶ *I am ordained.* "I was appointed." — *Conybeare*. The Greek word ἐρέθην has not the technical signification which is now generally attached to the word ordain. It occurs nearly a hundred times, in some of its forms, in the New Testament, but is not elsewhere translated *ordained*, except in John xv. 16. It is variously translated *put*, *make*, *appoint*, *lay*, *bow*, *give*, *set*, etc. See 2 Tim. i. 11, where the same word is rendered "am appointed." ¶ *A preacher, and an apostle.* See

notes on Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. ¶ *I speak the truth, &c.* An earnest affirmation. See note on Rom. ix. 1. ¶ *A teacher of the Gentiles.* Paul regarded himself, and with good reason, as specially appointed to be a teacher or "apostle of the Gentiles." He was set apart to this service, at his conversion, Acts xxvi. 17, 18; the injunction was renewed by the same spirit at Jerusalem, Acts xxii. 21; and his fellow-apostles allotted the same labor to him, by direction of the same spirit. Acts xiii. 1-4. See note on Rom. xi. 13. ¶ *In faith and verity.* "That is, in the true faith of the gospel." — *Macknight*.

8. *I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere.* "Not merely in the temple, or in other sacred places, but in all places. The Jews supposed that there was special efficacy in prayers offered at the temple in Jerusalem; the heathen, also, had the same view in regard to their temples; for both seemed to suppose that they came *nearer* to God by approaching his sacred abode. Christianity teaches that God may be worshipped in any place, and that we are at all times equally near him." — *Barnes*. See notes on John iv. 20-24. ¶ *Lifting up holy hands.* It was customary among the Jews to elevate the hands when offering prayer. See 1 Kings viii. 22; Isa. i. 15; Luke xxiv. 50. All who approach God in prayer should divest themselves, as far as possible, from all impurity. Ps. xxiv. 3, 4; xxvi. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 28. ¶ *Without wrath.* Wrath or anger against others is inconsistent with that spirit which breathes sincere prayers "for all men," ver. 1. See Matt. v. 23, 24; 1 John iii. 15; iv. 20. ¶ *And doubting.* The word δισλογισμοῦ "sometimes signifies, reasonings in one's own mind, sometimes reasonings and disputings with others. See Luke ix. 46, 47." — *Macknight*. "I find not that the Greek ever bears the sense of doubt-

women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

ing, but always imports, in the New Testament, either inward reasonings, or tumultuating thoughts." — *Whitby*. But are not such "reasonings" in fact doubtings? And in praying for all men, what "reasonings in one's own mind," or "inward reasonings," would more naturally arise, than whether such prayers were acceptable to God, and would be granted? To guard against such reasonings or doubts, the apostle declares in ver. 3-6, that such prayers are acceptable, and that God will grant them; and therefore he would have men pray without doubting, or doubtful reasonings. In this aspect of the case, I think that Doddridge rightly interprets "without doubting" thus:—"with a lively faith in the power and wisdom, the goodness and faithfulness, of God, and a cheerful dependence on all those gracious promises by which he encourages our addresses."

9. *In like manner also*. "With the same regard to what religion demands," — *Barnes*. ¶ *In modest apparel*. That is, in comely, decorous, but inexpensive apparel. ¶ *With shamefacedness and sobriety*. Let modesty and propriety of conduct be their distinguishing adornment. They should not violate the most strict decorum. ¶ *Not with braided hair, or gold, &c.* We are not to understand that a decent regard to personal appearance is forbidden, or that all outward ornaments are absolutely prohibited. But "costly array" is disapproved, because it involves expenditures which are often grievous to be borne, because it is an evil example to others, who are less able to bear the burden, and because it indicates a stronger desire for outward show, than for the improvement of the mind and of the heart.

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

10. *But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works*. This verse is thus marked parenthetically by Griesbach, Macknight, and others. "But instead of them, to add to modesty and sobriety, ver. 9, the richer embroidery and jewels of all good works, charity to others, which becomes Christian professors infinitely better than those other ways of expense upon fine clothes," &c. — *Hammond*.

11. *Let the woman learn in silence, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. xiv. 35.

12. *But I suffer not a woman to teach*. See notes on 1 Cor. xiv. 34-36.

13. *For Adam was first formed, then Eve*. This is stated as a reason why woman should not "usurp authority over the man," but occupy a subordinate position. See note on 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.

14. *And Adam was not deceived, &c.* That is, he was not first deceived, nor first in transgression. ¶ *But the woman being deceived was in the transgression*. One portion of the penalty pronounced on the transgressor was, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Gen. iii. 16. This, at the least, implies the subordinate station of the woman, and it is cited here as a second reason why she should not "usurp authority over the man."

15. *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, &c.* This verse has been variously interpreted. *Whitby*, *Benson*, *Harwood*, and *Newcome*, agree substantially, that the meaning is, "Her life shall be preserved through the perils of childbirth." *Chrysostom*, *Schleusner*, *Rosenmüller*, *Robinson*, and others, think *child-bearing* denotes the "becoming the mother of a family, and the faithful performance of her duties in that relation, in bringing up her household unto God."

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

Lightfoot, Hammond, Knatchbull, Doddridge, Macknight, and others, suppose the apostle refers to Gen. iii. 15, teaching that the woman shall be saved by means of bearing a child; namely, the Messiah. These may serve as a sample. But I think a more simple interpretation may better harmonize with the general scope of the passage. The current of thought seems to run thus: In ver. 12, the apostle says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." See note on 1 Cor. xi. 3. As reasons why woman should occupy such a subordinate station, he mentions two facts: (1.) that the man was "first formed," and the woman from him, ver. 13, and (2.) that the woman was first in the transgression, ver. 14, for which offence the Supreme Ruler declared that her husband should rule over her. Gen. iii. 16. So much of the penalty justifies the rule prescribed by the apostle. But in referring to this, he remembered, also, the other portion of the penalty, in regard to child-bearing, and by way of encouragement declared that although this penalty was not remitted, it should not prevent her final salvation. To the same effect, substantially, it has been said, "the way of salvation was open to her as well as to man, and was to be entered in the same manner. If she had faith and holiness, even in her condition of sorrow, brought on by guilt, she might as well hope for eternal life as man. The object of the apostle seems to be, to guard against a possible construction which might be put on his words, that he did not regard the woman, as in circumstances as favorable for salvation as those of man, or as if he taught that salvation was more difficult, or perhaps that she could not

## CHAPTER III.

THIS is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one

be saved at all." — *Barnes*. "A state of marriage is very consistent with a state of salvation; all I require from women in that state is the faith, and love, and purity, of Christians." — *Gilpin*. "Notwithstanding by child-bearing and subjection to man, God hath imprinted on women the mark of the punishment inflicted upon Eve, and all women that conceive and bring forth children, yet the apostle teacheth that this shall not hinder their salvation, if they abide in the faith, nor the bodily evils and sorrows that they endure stop the operation of the spirit of grace in them. Or, bearing and breeding children is an ordinary way through which women go to heaven. Ch. v. 14." — *Assemb. Annot.* "The infliction of this punishment (the pains of child-bearing), even unto death, is, and shall be, no hindrance of the woman's eternal salvation, if there be found with her those holy qualifications and gracious conditions which the gospel requires; partly in regard of the relation which God stands in to her, partly in regard of the covenant which God has made with her; a child is as much a child under the rod, as in the bosom; neither the father's stroke nor the child's grief can dissolve that relation." — *Poole*.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *The office of a bishop.* "The Greek here is a single word, ἐπισκοπής. The word ἐπισκοπή, *Episcope*, whence the word *Episcopal* is derived, occurs but four times in the New Testament. It is translated *visitation*, in Luke xix. 44, and in 1 Pet. ii. 12; *bishoprick*, Acts i. 20; and in this place, *office of a bishop*. The verb from which it is derived, ἐπισκοπέω, occurs but twice. In

wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no

striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his

Heb. xii. 15, it is rendered *looking diligently*, and in 1 Pet. v. 2, *taking the oversight*. The noun rendered *bishop* occurs in Acts xx. 28; Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 25. The verb means properly, to look upon, behold, to inspect, to look after, see to, take care of; and the noun denotes the office of overseeing, inspecting, or looking to. It is never employed in the New Testament to designate an order of men superior to presbyters, regarded as having any other functions than presbyters, or being in any sense 'successors' to the apostles. It is so used now, by the advocates of prelacy; but this is a use wholly unknown to the New Testament. It is so undeniable that the name is never given in the New Testament to those who are now called 'bishops,' that even Episcopalians concede it. As it is never used in the Scriptures with reference to *prelates*, it should be used with reference to the pastors, or other officers of the church: and to be a *pastor* or *overseer* of the flock of Christ should be regarded as being a scriptural *bishop*."—*Barnes*.

2. *Blameless*. "Faultless."—*Tynedale*. "Irreprehensible."—*Haweis*. "Unblamed."—*Macknight*. "Free from reproach."—*Conybeare*. Not that absolute perfection is an indispensable qualification for the office of bishop or pastor, but he should be free from the imputation of immorality or heresy. ¶ *The husband of one wife*. This should not be regarded as a requisition that a bishop must be a married man, nor as a prohibition against a second marriage; but the rule is simply, that a Christian bishop, or pastor, should have only one wife at the same time. Polygamy had been practised, both by Jews and Gentiles. The apostle forbids such an abomination in the Christian church. ¶ *Vigilant*. This word, *νηφάλιος*, denotes literally, "sober, temperate, especially in regard to wine," and figuratively,

"sober-minded, watchful, circumspect."—*Robinson*. ¶ *Sober*. "To be sober-minded, to think and act soberly, discreetly, to use sound judgment and moderation."—*Robinson*. ¶ *Of good behavior*. Or, *modest*, as in the margin. "Respectable."—*Haweis*. "Orderly."—*Conybeare*. "The most correct rendering, according to the modern use of language, would be that he should be a *gentleman*. He should not do violence to the usages of refined intercourse, nor be unfit to appear respectably in the most refined circles of society."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Given to hospitality*. See note on Rom. xii. 13. ¶ *Apt to teach*. No one should take on himself the office of bishop or pastor, unless he be able to impart to his flock a knowledge of Christian truth and duty.

3. *Not given to wine*. Not a wine-bibber. Not in the habit of using wine as a beverage. The example of a pastor given to wine would be pernicious to the flock. ¶ *No striker*. Not quarrelsome, but peaceable. ¶ *Not greedy of filthy lucre*. "Greek, not desirous of base gain. The desire of this is condemned everywhere in the New Testament; but it is especially the duty of a minister of the gospel to be free from it. He has a right to a support (see notes on 1 Cor. ix.); but there is nothing that more certainly paralyzes the usefulness of a minister of the gospel than the love of money."—*Barnes*. ¶ *But patient*. Or, *gentle*, as the same word is translated, in Tit. iii. 2; James iii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 18. In Phil. iv. 5, it is rendered *moderation*. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. ¶ *Not a brawler*. "Not contentious, not quarrelsome."—*Robinson*. ¶ *Not covetous*. Literally, "not loving silver." Not an inordinate lover of money. "Theodoret here notes that the apostle does not say, he must be 'one who possesseth none;' for a man may possess these things, and yet distribute them as he



own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity ;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

8 Likewise *must* the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre ;

ought, so as not to be a slave to them, but a lord over them." — *Whitby*.

4. *One that ruleth well his own house, &c.* This implies that the *bishop* or *pastor* should have a wife and children, ver. 2, and therefore stands in opposition to the Papal requisition of celibacy. The head of the family should be grave and dignified, securing obedience, as well as cheerful, affable, and companionable, securing affection.

5. *For if a man know not, &c.* "This seems founded on a sort of proverb, that he who cannot regulate his private affairs is not fit to be entrusted with those of the public." — *Bloomfield*. It should be observed, that while the apostle compares the church with the family, he also distinguishes between the two, and says the father should "*rule his own house*," but the pastor should "*take care of the church of God*."

6. *Not a novice*. Or, "one newly come to the faith," as in the margin. "The Greek word, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, means, properly, that which is 'newly planted.' Thus it would mean a plant that was not strong, or not fitted to bear the severity of storms, that had not as yet struck its root deep, and could not resist the fierceness of a cold blast. Then the word comes to mean a new convert; one who has had little opportunity to test his own faith, or to give evidence to others that he would be faithful to the trust committed to him. The word does not refer so much to one who is young in years, as to one who is young in faith. Still, all the reasons which apply against introducing a very recent convert into the ministry will apply commonly, with equal force, against

introducing one young in years." — *Barnes*. ¶ *He fall into the condemnation of the devil*. "Several eminent expositors, from Luther and Erasmus downward, take τοῦ διαβόλου (*the devil*) to mean the *calumniator*, or slanderous enemy of the gospel, the noun being, they say, used generically of those who seek an occasion to calumniate the Christians." — *Bloomfield*. "According to Erasmus, this clause should be translated, 'fall into the condemnation of the accuser;' a sense which the word διάβολος hath, ver. 11. For he supposes, that by the accuser is meant the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, who were ready to condemn the Christians for every misdemeanor." — *Macknight*.

7. *Good report of them which are without*. His reputation must be good among those who are not members of the church. "The reason for this injunction is obvious. It is his business to endeavor to do such men good, and to persuade them to become Christians. But no minister of the gospel can possibly do such men good, unless they regard him as an upright and honest man." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Lest he fall into reproach*. The more conspicuous his position, the more intently are his imperfections scanned; and faults, which might pass unnoticed or unrebuked in a private condition, are sharply condemned in a bishop or pastor, by "them which are without," especially, if by so doing they may bring the church itself into disrepute. ¶ *The snare of the devil*. That is, of "the calumniator or slanderous enemy of the gospel." See note on ver. 6.

8. *Likewise must the deacons*. Deacons were appointed early in the church. See notes on Acts vi. 1-6. The name

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless.

11 Even so *must* their wives

*deacon*, literally meaning "a waiter, attendant, servant, minister," is here used to denote "one who has charge of the alms and money of the church, and overseer of the sick and the poor, an almoner." — *Robinson*. ¶ *Grave*. See note on ver. 4. ¶ *Not double-tongued*. Not saying one thing to one, and another thing to another; or, not saying one thing and meaning another; but speaking the truth, plainly and honestly. ¶ *Not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre*. See note on ver. 3.

9. *Holding the mystery of faith, &c.* For the meaning of the word *mystery*, See notes on Rom. xi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 7. "In the interpretation of these words, expositors not a little differ. But the sense seems simply to be, 'holding the doctrines of the faith sincerely and conscientiously.'" — *Bloomfield*.

10. *And let these also first be proved.* "This does not mean that they were to be employed as preachers, but that they were to undergo a proper trial in regard to their fitness for the office which they were to fill. They were not to be put into it without any opportunity of knowing what they were. It should be ascertained that they were grave, serious, temperate, trustworthy men; men who were sound in the faith, and who would not dishonor the office. Thus in Acts vi. 3, when deacons were first appointed, the church was directed to 'look out seven men of honest report,' who might be appointed to the office." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Being found blameless*. Let them be elected, and let them enter upon the discharge of their office, if found worthy after strict investigation.

11. *Even so must their wives.* "Most modern commentators interpret, their (that is, the deacons') wives; while the ancient and most eminent modern ones take it to mean the order called *deacon-*

*esses*, to whom certainly the qualifications here mentioned are more suitable than to the former; and on such a point the voice of antiquity ought not lightly to be rejected; indeed, the former interpretation would require the *article*. In some cases, however, the same persons might be both deacons' wives and deaconesses." — *Bloomfield*. But if we suppose the wives of deacons are denoted, it may be observed that the influence and success of both deacons and pastors may be essentially promoted or hindered by the character and conduct of their wives. ¶ *Grave*. See note on ver. 4. ¶ *Not slanderers*. Literally, not devils. See note on Matt. iv. 1. "Comp. Titus ii. 3, 'not false accusers.' The Greek word is διαβόλους, *devils*. It is used here in its original and proper sense, to denote a calumniator, slanderer, or accuser. It occurs in the same sense in 2 Tim. iii. 3, and Tit. ii. 3. Here it means that they should not be women who were in the habit of calumniating others, or aspersing their character. Mingling as they would with the church, and having an opportunity to claim acquaintance with many, it would be in their power, if they chose, to do great injury to the character of others." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Sober*. See note on ver. 2. ¶ *Faithful in all things*. "Trusty in all that is committed to them." — *Hammond*.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used

12. *Husbands of one wife*. See note on ver. 2. ¶ *Ruling their children, &c.* See notes on ver. 4, 5.

13. *For they that have used the office of a deacon well*. Or, ministered well; performed their duties faithfully. ¶ *Purchase to themselves*. Obtain or acquire. See note on Acts xx. 28. ¶ *A good degree*. An honorable position.

¶ *Great boldness in the faith*. This "means, evidently, not so much public speaking, as a manly and independent exercise of faith in Christ. The

the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

15 But if I tarry long, that

sense is, that by the faithful performance of the duties of the office of deacon, and by the kind of experience which a man would have in that office, he would establish a character of firmness in the faith which would show that he was a decided Christian."—*Barnes*.

14. *Hoping to come unto thee shortly*. Namely, to visit Timothy at Ephesus, where Paul left him on his departure into Macedonia. See ch. i. 3.

15. *But if I tarry long*. He knew not, certainly, how long his visit might be delayed. Paul spake and wrote under the guidance of the Spirit, but he did not pretend to be omniscient. A greater than Paul made no such claim. Mark xiii. 32. ¶ *That thou mayest know how, &c.* The general idea is, that until Paul should visit Ephesus, whether shortly or after a longer period, Timothy should be guided by these written directions in his management of the "church of the living God," or that branch of it which was at present under his personal superintendence.

16. *Without controversy*. Without contradiction. "By consent of all, confessedly."—*Robinson*. ¶ *Great is the mystery*. See notes on Rom. xi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 7. ¶ *Godliness*. Or, holiness. "The word *godliness* means, properly, piety, reverence, or religiousness. It is used here, however, for the gospel scheme, to wit, that which the apostle proceeds to state. This 'mystery' which had 'been hidden from ages and from generations, and which was now manifest,' Col. i. 26, was the great doctrine on which depended religion everywhere, or was that which constituted the Christian scheme."—*Barnes*. ¶ *God was manifest in the flesh*. "Probably there is no passage in the New Testament which has excited so much discussion

thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the

among critics as this, and none in reference to which it is so difficult to determine the true reading."—*Barnes*. Without attempting a full and exhaustive examination of the subject in dispute, I remark that the question is, whether the apostle wrote Θεός, *God*, or ὅς, *who*, or *he who*, or ὁ, *which*. The difficulty may be more easily perceived, when it is considered that the early Greek manuscripts were written wholly in capital letters, without points, and without division of words. Moreover, words were frequently contracted by writing only a portion of the letters, sometimes the first and last, the omission being indicated by a line drawn over the top. It may be added, that one form of the Greek ε closely resembled the English capital C. The question, then, is, whether Paul wrote Θε (the contracted form of Θεός), or Οc, or O. An alteration from the first form to the second might easily be made, by erasing the two horizontal marks, or from the second to the first, by adding them. "To ascertain which of these is the true reading has been the great question; and it is with reference to this that the microscope has been resorted to in the examination of the Alexandrine manuscript. It is now generally admitted that the faint line over the word has been added by some later hand, though not improbably by one who found that the line was nearly obliterated, and who meant merely to restore it. Whether the letter O was originally written with a line within it, making the reading *God*, it is now said to be impossible to determine, in consequence of the manuscript at this place having become so much worn by frequent examination. The Vulgate and the Syriac read it, *who* or *which*. The Vulgate is, 'great is the sacra-

flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

ment of piety, which was manifested in the flesh.' The Syriac, 'great is the mystery of godliness, that he was manifested in the flesh.' The *probability* in regard to the correct reading here, as it seems to me, is, that the word, as originally written, was Θεός, *God*. At the same time, however, the evidence is not so clear, that it can be properly used in an argument." — *Barnes*. Taking the case precisely as it is stated by Dr. Barnes, I am constrained to say that the *probability* seems to me to be in favor of the other reading. Such is the conclusion, also, of Griesbach, one of the most distinguished critics, who admits Θεός into his edition of the New Testament. And it is worthy of notice that, in the Trinitarian controversy in the early age of the church, there is no evidence that this passage was ever quoted in proof of the doctrine of the Trinity. The authors of the Improved Version, accepting this as the true reading, translate thus: "He who was manifested in the flesh was justified by the spirit, seen by messengers, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received in glory." Norton prefers Θεός as the true reading, and says, "The following rendering, then, I believe, gives the meaning of the apostle. 'I thus write to you, hoping to come to you shortly; but should I be delayed, that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, that is, the assembly of the living God.' Beyond doubt, the great pillar and foundation of the true religion is the new doctrine concerning piety, which has been made known in human weakness, proved true by divine power, while angels were looking on, which has been proclaimed to the Gentiles, believed in the world, and has obtained a glorious reception." — *Statement of Reasons*, pp. 133, 134. In my judgment, however, this construction is not so natural as that given in the Improved Version, which recognizes

## CHAPTER IV.

NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter

the Lord Jesus Christ as the subject of discourse, and which harmonizes with the language of the beloved apostle, — "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." 1 John iv. 2. Even if Θεός, *God*, be accepted as the true reading, although his being "received up into glory" might appear like an absurdity, his becoming "manifest in the flesh" would not necessarily imply more than is elsewhere asserted. For example, our Lord says, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John xiv. 10. And the apostle declares that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. v. 19. Undoubtedly God manifested himself more fully and distinctly in his Son than in any other created being; yet a distinction is always recognized between God and the being in whom he is manifested. On the whole, I observe, (1.) That, as Dr. Barnes acknowledges, "the evidence is not so clear" in favor of Θεός, as the true reading, "that it can be properly used in argument." (2.) That, whatever be the true reading, it furnishes no proof that Jesus Christ was more than "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." Heb i. 3. (3.) That, as a matter of fact, there is no evidence that this passage was ever quoted in proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, when that doctrine was earnestly and even violently controverted in the Fourth Century.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly. To whom the revelation was first made does not appear; but it is manifest that, in the apostolic age, an approaching "apostasy" was recognized as a re-

times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

vealed truth. See 2 Thess. ii. 3-5; 1 John ii. 18. ¶ *That in the latter times.* Namely, the closing period of the Jewish polity, when it was about to give place to the full establishment of Christianity. It was then near at hand; and the Apostle John referred to it as being present when he wrote: "It is the last time; and as ye have heard that Anti-Christ shall come, even now are there many Anti-Christ; whereby we know that it is the last time." 1 John ii. 18. "The worst of men and times are foretold to be in those last days of Jerusalem, because they did not improve those mercies, 1 Tim. iv. 1; and 2 Tim. iii. 1. In such a sense are such phrases as these to be understood; 'upon whom the ends of the world are come,' 1 Cor. x. 11. Not the very last times of the world, for the world hath lasted sixteen hundred years since Paul spake that, and how long yet it may last, who knoweth? but the end of that old world of the Jewish state, which then hastened on very fast." — *Lightfoot*. ¶ *Some shall depart from the faith.* Literally, shall apostatize from the faith. See note on 2 Thess. ii. 3. The Greek word used here "denotes generally and properly apostasy from a religion, by entire abandonment; but, sometimes, as here, only a falling away or defection from the true faith of it, by either rejecting some of its doctrines, or arbitrarily introducing others, or corrupting some of them by an admixture of the dogma of heathenism or Judaism." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Giving heed to seducing spirits.* Or, to false teachers, who professed to be under the influence of the divine Spirit. With reference to such, the apostle exhorts: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John iv. 1. Some of the false doctrines taught in those "latter times" are specified in what

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and

follows. ¶ *And doctrines of devils.* Or, "doctrines concerning demons." — *Pearce and Macknight*. "The word translated *demons* was used by the Greeks to denote a kind of beings of a middle nature between God and man. See 1 Cor. x. 20. They gave the same name also to the souls of some departed men, who they thought were exalted to the state and honor of demons for their virtue. See Newton on Prophecy, vol. ii. p. 418. The former sort they called superior demons, and supposed them to have the nature and office which we ascribe to angels. The latter they termed inferior-demons. These were of the same character with the Romish saints. And both sorts were worshipped as mediators." — *Macknight*. The word here translated *devils* is *δαιμονίων*, properly demons, not *διάβολος*, in any of its forms.

2. *Speaking lies in hypocrisy.* This is said concerning the seducing spirits, or false teachers, ver. 1, and it is alleged that they not only taught false doctrines, but that they did so intentionally; that they spake lies under the hypocritical pretence of speaking truth. ¶ *Having their conscience seared with a hot iron.* "Marked with a hot iron." — *Tyndale*. "The meaning of this phrase is, I conceive, not rightly apprehended, when it is thought to signify an insensate conscience, as if the resemblance were here to flesh when it is seared or cauterized. Hesychius and Phavorinus have both taken notice of the phrase, and rendered it to another sense. Saith Hesychius, the phrase denotes those that, being brought to the test, are found faulty, have not a good conscience. And so saith Phavorinus also, referring doubtless to this phrase, it signifies having not a sound or whole conscience." — *Hammond*. "Estius thinks this clause should be translated, who are burnt in their conscience; meaning that those impostors

*commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God

would bear in their consciences indelible marks of their atrocious crimes, as malefactors bear in their bodies marks impressed with red-hot irons, in token of their crimes. This opinion Bengelius espouses, and supports it by a passage from Plato's *Gorgias*.—*Macknight*. "They bear the marks of their hypocrisy as evidently and as indelibly in their conscience, in the sight of God, as those who have been cauterized for their crimes do, in the sight of men. It was customary in ancient times to mark those with a hot iron who had been guilty of great crimes, such as sacrilege," &c.—*Clarke*. To the same effect, substantially, are the interpretations given by Theophylact, Grotius, Calmet, Rosenmüller, and others.

3. *Forbidding to marry*. Many suppose the apostle refers to the Papal Church, which enjoins celibacy on its priests. But the better opinion is that the reference is to heresies existing in the apostolic age. "In the pastoral epistles, we find the prohibition of marriage, the enforced abstinence from food, and other bodily mortifications, mentioned as characteristics of heresy. St. Paul declares that these errors shall come 'in the last days;' but St. John says 'the last days' were come in his time; and it is implied by St. Paul's words that the evils he denounces were already in action."—*Conybeare*. "I have oftentimes thought of those words of the apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 3, 'forbidding to marry.' Who were these that forbade to marry? but especially, upon what account did they forbid it? We know, indeed, upon what unreasonable reason marriage is forbidden to some in the Romish communion, in these latter ages of the world; but to whom, and upon what occasion, it was forbidden in those last days of the Jewish economy, to which times the

is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

6 If thou put the brethren in

apostle refers in this place, is not easily determined."—*Lightfoot*. The character of the prohibition, however, is easily determined; and the apostle denounces it as wholly unauthorized. ¶ *And commanding to abstain from meats*. "We observe a strong admixture of the Jewish element (exactly like that which prevailed, as we have seen, in the Colossian heresies) in the prohibition of particular kinds of food. Comp. ver. 4, and Col. ii. 16, 21, 22."—*Conybeare*. ¶ *Which God hath created to be received, &c.* Namely, the meats from which the false teachers commanded men to abstain. "The fact that God had created them was proof that they were not to be regarded as evil, and that it was not to be considered as a religious duty to abstain from them."—*Barnes*.

4. *For every creature of God is good, &c.* "Moral agents, men and angels, were good as they were made at first. Gen i. 31."—*Barnes*. This doctrine is doubtless true; but I do not think it is taught in this place. The apostle seems rather to refer exclusively to the various articles of food which God has provided for the sustenance of men, from some of which the false teachers required abstinence. "For indeed all the creatures in the world, being created for the use of man, may lawfully be used and eaten by a Christian, if it be done with faith and acknowledgment of the donor."—*Hammond*. "That is, every creature which God has made for man's nourishment is good for that purpose, and to be thankfully received whenever necessary for the support of human life; and nothing of that sort is at any time to be refused, rejected, or despised."—*Clarke*.

5. *For it is sanctified by the word of God*. "It is made holy or proper for our use by his permission, and no command of *man* can make it unholy or

remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

improper." — Barnes. ¶ *And prayer.* By prayer, or giving of thanks, we acknowledge the giver, and ask him to bless us in using what he has provided.

6. *Thou shalt be a good minister, &c.* The instructions given in this epistle were specially intended to inform Timothy what to teach and how to conduct as an accredited minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ch. iii. 14, 15.

7. *But refuse profane and old wives' fables.* Give no attention to the fictions uttered by false teachers. "The heathen religion abounded with fictions of this kind, and the Jewish teachers were also remarkable for the number of such fables which they had introduced into their system. It is probable that the apostle referred here particularly to the Jewish fables, and the counsel which he gives to Timothy is, to have nothing to do with them." — Barnes. ¶ *And exercise thyself rather unto godliness.* "Train thyself for the contests of godliness. It seems, from a comparison of this with the following verse, that the false teachers laid great stress on a training of the body by ascetic practices. For the metaphorical language, borrowed from the contests of the Palæstra, compare 1 Cor. ix. 27." — Conybeare.

8. *For bodily exercise profiteth little.* The word *γυμνασία*, *exercise*, technically denotes that training to which the gymnasts submitted when preparing for athletic contests. But the apostle is understood to refer rather to the fastings and penances practised by the Essenes, and imitated by some of the early Christians, as well as by some in subsequent times. Such "will-worship," partly indicated in ver. 3, is of little value compared with true

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.

10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, be-

piety and godliness. See note on Col. ii. 21-23. ¶ *But godliness is profitable unto all things, &c.* True piety or godliness is productive of happiness, at all times and in all places. According to its genuineness it makes its possessor happy in the "life that now is," and when thoroughly purified from sin and wholly sanctified in "that which is to come," the soul shall enjoy pure and unalloyed happiness.

9. *This is a faithful saying, &c.* "Assuredly true and worthy of entire confidence is the assertion." — Bloomfield. Some commentators connect this with the preceding verse, and some with ver. 10. It expresses an important truth in reference to both; and may properly enough be connected with either.

10. *For therefore.* "That what we affirm is true, you may be assured by this certain evidence, that for this cause we labor and undergo great perils. Therefore do we bear up under such accumulated hardships and difficulties, because we have a fixed hope in the living God," &c. — Bloomfield. ¶ *We both labor and suffer reproach.* Paul and his fellow-apostles, like all pioneers in reformation of faith or morals, endured severe labor and encountered reproach. "The labor was chiefly experienced in carrying this intelligence abroad among the Gentiles; the reproach arose chiefly from the Jews for doing it." — Barnes. ¶ *Because we trust in the living God.* The most natural meaning of this phrase is, that Paul endured labor and reproach on account of his confidence in the living God as the Saviour of all men. That is, he labored to convince man that God is the universal Father and Saviour, the God not of the Jews only, but of the

cause we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all

men, specially of those that believe.

Gentiles, Rom. iii. 29; and he was consequently reproached by the Jews, who desired to monopolize all divine blessings. Most commentators, however, concur substantially in the interpretation by Bloomfield, quoted at the commencement of this note. ¶ *Who is the Saviour of all men.* "The prominence given to this truth of the universality of salvation in this epistle (compare ch. ii. 4) seems to imply that it was denied by the Ephesian false teachers. So the Gnostics considered salvation as belonging only to the enlightened few, who, in their system, constituted a kind of spiritual aristocracy." — *Conybeare*. The "universality of salvation" has been denied by multitudes in the Christian church, from the days of the "Ephesian false teachers" even until now; and many devices have been adopted to avoid the force of Paul's language here. The more common are (1.) that σωτήρ, *Saviour*, means no more than *Preserver*. "The preserver of all men, — agreeable to its use in other passages: Ps. xxxvi. 6, 'Lord, thou preservest man and beast.' Job vii. 20, 'I have sinned — O thou preserver of men.' God preserves both man and beast by the care of his providence; but saves believers from eternal death." — *Macknight*. It may be remarked that this word, occurring twenty-four times in the New Testament, is nowhere translated *preserver*, but uniformly *saviour*; and in every case it is joined with the name of God or of his Son Jesus Christ. The proof-text quoted by Macknight from the Old Testament is no exception to this rule; for the word translated *preserver* in Job vii. 20, is not σωτήρ, but ἐπιστάμενος in the Septuagint. In the Old Testament, σωτήρ occurs twenty times, and is translated twice *deliverer*, Judges iii. 9, 15, and in all other cases *saviour* or *salvation*. The phrase, literally, "God our Saviour," is ordinarily translated "God of our salvation." God is represented as the saviour or deliverer in every place, except Judges iii. 9, 15, and

uniformly, both here and in the New Testament, the manifest idea conveyed is *deliverance*, not *preservation*. There is no good reason to suppose the word to be used here by Paul in a sense which it bears nowhere else in the Bible. (2.) Another interpretation, framed to modify the explicit language of the apostle, is this: "Who has provided salvation for the whole human race, and has freely offered it to them in his word, and by his Spirit. What God intends for all, he actually gives to them that believe in Christ, who died for the sins of the world, and tasted death for every man." — *Clarke*. See note on ch. ii. 4. It is sheer mockery to style God the Saviour of any man whom he does not and never will save. Suppose he "has provided salvation for the whole human race and has freely offered it to them;" if he does not "actually give" it to all, it is absurd to style him "the Saviour of all men." He is the Saviour of every man whom he actually saves, and of none other. There is a sense, however, in which the language of Clarke is true, though he manifestly did not design to be so understood. God intends, or has purposed, to bestow salvation on all men. Ch. ii. 4; Eph. i. 9, 10; Phil. ii. 10, 11. In accordance with this intention, "the Father sent the Son, to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John iv. 14; and the Son "gave himself a ransom for all," ch. ii. 6, and "tasted death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. "What God intends for all" he will surely bestow in due time, and "he actually gives to them that believe." Through faith in the truth, men enter into the present enjoyment of that unspeakable blessing which God hath provided. Salvation and the knowledge of the truth are closely connected. Ch. ii. 4. Compare John v. 24; viii. 32-36; xvii. 17; Rom. v. 1, 2. In this sense, God is the Saviour, "specially of those that believe." To this special salvation Peter referred, when he said, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believ-



11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attend-

ing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." 1 Pet. i. 8, 9. This special salvation may be enjoyed by believers, even in the present life. Final salvation for all is secured by the purpose of God. And though we see it not yet bestowed on all, we see his promise and some of the means adopted to make it effectual. See Heb. ii. 8, 9.

11. *These things command and teach.* Namely, the precepts and doctrines previously specified.

12. *Let no man despise thy youth.* Do not, by levity or indiscretion, give occasion to any to treat you with contempt, as a boy rather than as a man. On the contrary, by soundness of speech, by the exhibition of a loving spirit, by firmness of faith, and by purity of life and conversation, be thou a fit example for imitation by believers. Timothy is supposed to have been a young man when this epistle was written, but no means are known to exist for ascertaining his exact age. Suffice it, that, by gravity and discretion, a very young man may give satisfactory evidence of maturity; while older men often seem immature, on account of frivolity and indiscretion.

13. *Till I come.* See note on ch. iii.

15. ¶ *Give attendance to reading.* In the apostolic age there were no printed books, but there were manuscript copies of the Old Testament, on parchment. These Paul exhorted Timothy to read, for the improvement of his mind, that he might be able to instruct others. There were also similar copies of Grecian writings, with which the apostle was evidently acquainted, and which he desired his disciple to read. ¶ *To exhortation.* See note on Rom. xii. 8. ¶ *To doctrine.* To the teaching of the truth. See note on Rom. xii. 7.

ance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to

14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee.* The peculiar qualification for the ministry. This may be understood, either of the natural endowments of his mind, or of those spiritual gifts which were imparted to the early disciples and teachers, and which were expressed by the word, χάρισμα used here. ¶ *By prophecy.* "According to the revelation from the Spirit concerning thee. Ch. i. 18."—*Hammond.* ¶ *With the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.* "It was common to lay on the hands in imparting a blessing, or in setting apart to any office. See Matt. xix. 15; Mark vi. 5; Luke iv. 40; xiii. 13; Lev. viii. 14; Numb. xxvii. 23; Acts xxviii. 8; vi. 6; viii. 17; xiii. 3. The reference here is undoubtedly to the act by which Timothy was set apart to the office of the ministry."—*Barnes.* The laying on of hands did not add strength or brilliancy to the natural understanding; but spiritual gifts sometimes followed. See notes on Acts viii. 15–17.

15. *Meditate upon these things.* Namely, upon the duties pertaining to his office. ¶ *Give thyself wholly to them.* The duties of all Christian ministers demand constant, and earnest, and devoted attention. Upon Timothy devolved even greater responsibility, because the apostle had committed to him the oversight of several churches. ¶ *That thy profiting may appear to all.* Or, "in all things," as in the margin. Thy "progress, advancement, furtherance"—*Robinson.* A minister of the gospel should not only "grow in grace," but he should also constantly grow "in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. iii. 18. If he really grow, if he constantly increase his stock of knowledge and diligently impart it to others, his advancement will be recognized and appreciated.

them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

16. *Take heed unto thyself.* "This may be understood as relating to everything of a personal nature that would qualify him for his work. It may be applied to personal piety, to health, to manners, to habits of living, to temper, to the ruling purposes, to the intercourse with others." — *Barnes*. ¶ *And unto the doctrine.* Be diligent to learn the truth, and faithful to proclaim it. Woe to the minister of the gospel, who is negligent or unfaithful in his important work, who is ignorant through lack of investigation, or who, for any reason whatever, withholds the truth or preaches falsehood intentionally. ¶ *Continue in them.* Persevere in the performance of every duty previously specified. ¶ *For in so doing, thou shalt both save, &c.* Thou wilt thus grow in grace and knowledge, and assist others to attain similar growth, and so both thou and they become more and more fully partakers of that special salvation, which accompanies faith and obedience. See ver. 10; John v. 24; James i. 25. Of course, we are not to understand the apostle to mean that Timothy would obtain full and final salvation from sin, as a reward of faithful works; much less that the final salvation of his hearers was suspended on his faithfulness. "The living God," through his Son, Jesus Christ, and he alone, "is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe."

## CHAPTER V.

1. *Rebuke not an elder, &c.* "When reproof is necessary, do not severely rebuke an old man, but beseech him as thou wouldst beseech thy father in the like case; and the young men who sin, as if they were thy own brothers." — *Macknight*. A decent re-

## CHAPTER V.

**R**EBUKE not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

2 The elder women as moth-

spect to the aged, and courtesy to the young, should never be forgotten by the minister of the gospel. By becoming a minister, he should not cease to be a gentleman.

2. *The elder women, &c.* The same lesson of courtesy is here taught, as in ver. 1. ¶ *With all purity.* In his intercourse with the female members of his flock, whether for encouragement or admonition, the minister should carefully "abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thess. v. 22. "On nothing else do the fair character and usefulness of a youthful minister more depend, than on the observance of this precept. A youthful minister, who fails here, can never recover the perfect purity of an unsullied reputation, and never in subsequent life be wholly free from suspicion." — *Barnes*.

3. *Honor widows that are widows indeed.* "The best expositors are agreed that the sense is, 'support, or competently provide for,' as at ver. 17; Matt. xv. 4-6. Those who are really widows, in the proper sense of the word (adverted to at ver. 5), namely, destitute. From what the fathers and Greek commentators tell us, it appears that these persons were *maintained* from the funds of the church; and yet, from what follows, it is clear that they filled an *office*; the name *χήρα* being as much one of office as *διάκονος*, though the exact nature of its duties has not been determined. That the persons who held it instructed the younger females in the principles of the Christian faith is pretty certain; but whether they were, as some say, the same as deaconesses, is yet a disputed point." — *Bloomfield*. "What Paul regarded as constituting true widowhood, he specifies in ver. 4, 5, 9, 10. He connects with it the idea that she had no persons depend-

ers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in suppli-

cations and prayers night and day.

6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

9 Let not a widow be taken

---

ent on her; that she was desolate, and evinced true trust in God; that she was so aged that she would not marry again; and that by her life she had given evidence of possessing a heart of true benevolence. Ver. 10." — *Barnes*.

4. *Nephews*. Rather, grandchildren. The word, *εγγονα* denotes descendants further removed than children. ¶ *Let them learn, &c.* That is, let the children and grandchildren supply the wants of their mothers and grandmothers, who are widows, and not permit them to be burdensome to the church. ¶ *To requite their parents*. To repay, so far as is possible, the kindness extended to them when they were young and helpless.

5. *Desolate*. Destitute of children or other descendants, on whom she might rely for assistance. ¶ *Trusteth in God, &c.* If she did not trust in God, and habitually offer to him her fervent prayers and supplications, she would scarcely claim to be a Christian, or entitled to the special care of the church.

6. *But she that liveth in pleasure, &c.* Nothing absolutely vicious or criminal is implied here. "But the widow who liveth in gayety and luxury is dead while she liveth in that manner, and should not be employed as a teacher of the young." — *Macknight*. She is dead to all useful Christian purposes, and is not worthy to be maintained at the charge of the church.

7. *These things give in charge, &c.* Namely, the duty of children to make suitable provision for their wid-

---

owed mothers and grandmothers; make them realize this Christian duty, and stimulate them to perform it.

8. *But if any provide not for his own, &c.* The special subject is the duty of providing for destitute mothers and grandmothers; yet here, as elsewhere, the apostle enforces a general precept of like character. "For if any one professing Christianity maintaineth not his own poor relations, and especially those with whom he hath lived in family, he hath renounced the faith of the gospel, and is worse than an infidel; many of whom would be ashamed of thus violating the obligations of nature and humanity." — *Macknight*.

9. *Taken into the number*. Or, *chosen*, as in the margin. It is not here distinctly stated for what purpose they were chosen, or to be regarded as widows of the church; but it was probably to instruct the young, and to receive maintenance. See note on ver. 3. ¶ *Under threescore years old*. Why younger widows were excluded, may be gathered from what is said in ver. 11-14. ¶ *Having been the wife of one man*. Many commentators understand the apostle to mean such as had been only once married. But this seems inconsistent with the direction given in ver. 14. We can scarcely suppose the apostle would advise and direct the younger widows to do that which would disqualify them from being regarded as "widows indeed," if they should again be left "desolate." The better opinion seems to be

into the number under three-score years old, having been the wife of one man,

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

as follows: "The wife of one husband, namely, at a time. For, although it was not the custom among civilized nations for a woman to be married to more than one husband at a time, if a woman divorced her husband unjustly, and after that married herself to another man, she really had two husbands."—*Macknight*. "Nor any that have parted with their husbands, and married again."—*Hammond*. "That is, which hath had but one husband at once."—*Assemb. Annot.* "It is very certain that second marriages in general are not condemned by Christianity, and it would be a great objection against it if they were. I, therefore, am inclinable to think the meaning of the expression may be, one who has chastely confined herself to one husband, while in the married relation."—*Doddridge*. "Having lived in conjugal fidelity with her husband; or having had but one husband at a time; or, according to others, having never been but once married. But the former is the opinion of some of the most eminent of the Greek fathers, and appears to be that most consistent with the scope of the place, and with truth."—*Clarke*. See note on ch. iii. 2.

10. *Well reported of, &c.* Of good reputation. ¶ *If she have brought up children.* Her own, or the children of others. "He doth not say, 'if she hath borne children;' children are an heritage of the Lord, that depend on the will of God; but if she had not children of her own, yet she brought up children."—*Henry*. ¶ *If she have lodged strangers.* If she has been hospitable. ¶ *If she have washed the saints' feet.* In the East, to furnish

11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only

water for the feet was an ordinary act of civility. Gen. xviii. 4. See note on Luke vii. 44. This may be understood literally, or figuratively, as denoting willingness to perform even menial offices to promote the comfort of others.

11. *But the younger widows refuse.* That is, for admission into the class of widows before mentioned. See notes on ver. 3, 9. ¶ *Wax wanton against Christ, &c.* "In the Greek, there is no idea of wantonness in the sense of lasciviousness or lewdness; nor was this, though now a common idea attached to the word, by any means essential to it when our translation was made."—*Barnes*. "Receive not into the church-offices those widows who are under that age, for there will be danger of such, that they will be weary of their employment in the church, of living in that pious, strict condition, ver. 6, and then they will relieve themselves by marrying."—*Hammond*.

12. *Having damnation.* "Or, rather having condemnation; or incurring guilt."—*Barnes*. "Incurring censure."—*Haweis*. ¶ *Because they have cast off their first faith.* "Having violated their former engagement."—*Haweis*. "ἡσταν ἀθετεῖν means to break a promise, and is so explained by Chrysostom and by Augustine, in Ps. lxxv. Hence we see that, when a widow was received into the number of church-widows, a promise was required from her (or virtually understood), that she would devote herself for life to the employments which these widows undertook; namely, the education of orphans, and superintendence of younger women. There

idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

is no trace here of the subsequent ascetic disapprobation of second marriages, as is evident from ver. 14, where the younger widows are expressly desired to marry again." — *Conybeare*.

13. *And withal they learn to be idle, &c.* "That is, if supported by the church, and if without the settled principles which might be expected in those more aged and experienced, it may be feared that they will give themselves up to an indolent life. — No persons are commonly more dangerous to the peace of a neighborhood than those who have nothing to do." — *Barnes*.

14. *I will therefore that the younger women marry.* There is nothing in the Greek answering to the word *women*. *Widows* might more properly be supplied; for it is of this class that the apostle is speaking. "My direction therefore is, that the younger women, widows or others, that have not attained to this gravity of mind and command over themselves, do in that case betake themselves to a married life, and serve God in that, bearing and bringing up children, guiding domestic affairs, so that they may not do anything which may give advantage to those that are willing to take it, to accuse or find fault, or bring reproach upon such loose professors, and the church, for their sakes." — *Hammond*.

15. *Already turned aside after Satan.* "The full sense is, 'I say what I do, for certain persons have,' &c., in the way mentioned above, or, at any rate, have, by marrying, to prevent these aberrations, violated their sacred engagements to celibacy, so indispensable

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

to their all-absorbing office." — *Bloomfield*.

16. *If any man or woman that believeth.* Any Christian. ¶ *Have widows.* Widowed mothers or grandmothers, or others naturally dependent on them. See note on ver. 4. ¶ *Let them relieve them, &c.* Let all who are able to do so, provide for their destitute parents or children, and not cast them upon the charity of the church or the world; thus will the church be more able to assist those who are "widows indeed." Ver. 3, 5.

17. *Let the elders.* The Greek πρεσβύτεροι, *presbyters*, properly denotes "old men, seniors, the aged;" but is used also "as a title of dignity,—presbyters, elders, i. e., persons of ripe age and experience, who were called to take part in the management of public affairs;" and especially it denotes "the elders of Christian churches, *presbyters*, to whom was committed the direction and government of individual churches." — *Robinson*. Concerning the different offices exercised in the church, see note on 1 Cor. xii. 28. ¶ *That rule well.* "Presiding well, or well managing the spiritual interests of the church." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Be counted worthy of double honor.* "The word τιμῆς signifies the honor done to a person, by bestowing on him such things as are necessary to his comfortable support. Acts xxviii. 10. Hence *honor* signifies the maintenance given to parents who are poor. Matt. xv. 4. It signifies likewise the maintenance given by the church to widows. Ver. 3. The double honor, of which the elders who preside well are said to be worthy, is a liberal maintenance; for the Hebrews used the

18 For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

word *double*, to express plenty of anything. Thus Elisha, at parting with Elijah, prayed that a double portion of his spirit might 'be upon him.' 2 Kings ii. 9. See also Rev. xviii. 6."

— *Macknight*. ¶ *Especially they who labor*, &c. At the date of this epistle, it would seem that some of the presiding officers of the church were not teachers. Those who did teach were more serviceable, and more worthy of honor, than those who did not.

18. *For the Scripture saith*, &c. This is alleged as a reason why those who labored for the church should receive liberal honor or compensation. ¶ *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox*, &c. See notes on 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. ¶ *The laborer is worthy of his hire*. See Luke x. 7, and note on Matt. x. 10. As these words are not found in the Old Testament, Paul is supposed to have quoted them from Matthew, or more literally from Luke, and thus to have vouched for the canonical authority of the gospel.

19. *Against an elder*, &c. "Against an elder, — receive not an accusation, unless it is offered to be proved by two or three credible witnesses. This I think is the proper translation of the clause. For I see no reason why an accusation against an elder should not be received unless in the presence of witnesses; but I see a good reason for not receiving such an accusation unless it is offered to be proved by a sufficient number of credible witnesses. This method of proceeding puts a stop to groundless accusations of the ministers of religion." — *Macknight*.

20. *Them that sin rebuke before all*,

21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

&c. Although this direction may be understood in a general sense, it probably has special reference to the *elders* mentioned in ver. 19. And concerning these, while the apostle would protect them against "groundless accusations," it has been well observed that he "gave no injunction to attempt to cover up their faults, or to save them from a fair trial. If a minister of the gospel has been proved to be guilty of crime, the honor of religion, as well as simple justice, requires that he shall be punished as he deserves. He sins against great light; he prostitutes a holy office, and makes use of the very reputation which his office gives him, that he may betray the confidence of others; and such a man should not escape. There should be no 'benefit of clergy,' and neither a black coat, nor bands, nor the lawn, should save a villain." — *Barnes*.

21. *The elect angels*. Literally, the chosen messengers. Some suppose the chosen apostles of our Lord to be intended. The more common opinion is, that the apostle represented a higher rank of spiritual intelligent beings as taking cognizance of human actions. ¶ *That thou observe these things*. Not only the administration of discipline, ver. 19, 20, but the various duties prescribed in all the former part of this epistle, are probably here included. ¶ *Without preferring*, &c. Or, *without prejudice*, as in the margin. Be strictly impartial in administering all the affairs of the church, and in regard to all its members.

22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man*.

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after.

25 Likewise also the good works of *some* are manifest be-

forehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

## CHAPTER VI.

**L**ET as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

Admit no one to the work of the ministry, without a thorough conviction of his fitness and worthiness. See note on ch. iv. 14. ¶ *Neither be partaker of other men's sins.* "This is evidently to be interpreted in connection with the injunction to 'lay hands suddenly on no man.' He was not to invest one with a holy office, who was a wicked man or a heretic; for this would be to sanction his wickedness and error. If we ordain a man to the office of the ministry, who is known to be living in sin, or to cherish dangerous error, we become the patrons of the sin and of the heresy." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Keep thyself pure.* Specially from the contamination incurred by partaking of other men's sins in the manner before specified, and generally from all iniquity whatever. Be a living example of purity. Ch. iv. 12.

23. *Drink no longer water.* "Confine thyself no longer to water-drinking." — *Haweis*. *Drink no longer water only.* — *Conybeare*. This subject is introduced with apparent abruptness. The general opinion is, that while Paul was discussing the many laborious duties incumbent on Timothy, it suddenly occurred to him that this favorite disciple was not only young, but in feeble health, and subject to frequent infirmities, requiring medical treatment; and as his usefulness depended on his health, advised him to mingle a little wine with the water which had hitherto been his sole beverage. The following paraphrase exhibits a somewhat natural connection with the previous verse: "Your own example will be always pure; indeed, as far as your health is concerned, I

have thought you too abstemious." — *Gilpin*. ¶ *But use a little wine, &c.* Without discussing the question whether the wine here mentioned was the pure, unfermented juice of the grape, or whether it was an intoxicating liquor, it may be remarked, (1.) that only a *little* was prescribed by the apostle, and (2.) that even this was prescribed only as a medicine, not to gratify the palate, but to give strength to the stomach, and to prevent the wasting effects of constitutional infirmity. No countenance is here given to the use of wine or stronger drinks, for the purpose merely of gratification or exhilaration.

24, 25. *Some men's sins are open beforehand, &c.* The subject embraced in ver. 22 is here resumed. What is here said is doubtless true in its most wide application; yet the apostle seems to have had special reference to the qualifications of candidates for the ministry. "The general meaning may be thus expressed: Keep thyself pure from all participation in other men's sins, by ordaining unfit persons to the ministry, to avoid which, however, will require much circumspection and consideration; for though some men's sins are discernible without any close examination, *anticipating*, as it were, the judgment passed on them after examination; yet, in other persons, their faults only *follow*, being known only after much examination. In like manner, it is with respect to men's *virtues*. Some immediately appear; while others are only known after long acquaintance with the persons." — *Bloomfield*.

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and be-

loved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of

## CHAPTER VI.

1. *Let as many servants, &c.* Slavery in some form probably existed at Ephesus, at the date of this epistle. Paul would have such servants of even heathen masters yield quiet obedience, and treat their masters with due respect and deference, so that the gospel might not be supposed to countenance disorder and insubordination. See notes on 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22; Eph. vi. 5-8. However unchristian might be the conduct of the master, the servant should exhibit the spirit of Christ.

2. *And they that have believing masters.* That is, masters who were professed Christians. "It is clear, from this, that Paul supposed that, at that time, and under those circumstances, a man might become a Christian who had slaves under him. How long he might continue to hold his fellow-men in bondage, and yet be a Christian, is, however, quite a different question. It is quite clear from the New Testament, as well as from facts now, that God may convert men when pursuing any kind of wickedness. The effect of religion, however, in all cases, will be to lead them to cease to do wrong." — *Barnes*. Though the religion which American slaveholders professed did not effectually "lead them to cease to do wrong," and to let the oppressed go free, the foul blot of slavery has been erased from our national escutcheon, by the righteous and terrible judgments of God. We might not inaptly adopt the language of the Psalmist in praising God for this manifest interposition of divine power. See Ps. lxxviii. 31-35. ¶ *Let them not despise them.* Let them not be regardless of their legal obligations; let them not be disobedient. They might lawfully desire liberty, 1 Cor. vii. 21; but while they remained in bondage they

should be respectful. ¶ *Because they are brethren.* Both are servants of Christ, and in this respect they are equals. See note on 1 Cor. vii. 22. Yet the servant should not for this reason be insubordinate. ¶ *But rather do them service.* There is an additional reason for obedience in the fact that the master is a Christian, because the servant may reasonably expect more kind treatment from a Christian than from "a heathen man." Alas! that such reasonable expectations should so often have been disappointed. ¶ *Because they are faithful, &c.* "Because they who claim the benefit are believing and beloved." — *Conybeare*. "Because those who are partakers of the benefit of their good service are faithful and beloved, that is, beloved brethren, in the Lord. Compare Philem. 16." — *Bloomfield*. Some commentators interpret differently:—"The true reason assigned is, that the master had been, by the grace of God, permitted to participate in the same benefits of salvation as the servant; he had received, like him, the pardon of sin, and he was to be regarded as a fellow-heir of the grace of life." — *Barnes*. I prefer the former interpretation, which seems more natural, and which is pronounced by competent critics to be the more accurate construction of the Greek.

3. *If any man teach otherwise.* That is, if any attempt to excite insubordination among the servants, to induce them to commit acts of violence which would bring obloquy upon the gospel, ver. 1. It is generally supposed that the apostle here refers to the Jewish teachers. "That the apostle had the Judaizers in his eye here, is evident from Tit. i. 10, 11. 'There are many unruly and foolish talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision: whose mouth must be stopped, who subvert whole families, teaching things which they ought not, for the



our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain

is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

sake of sordid gain.' " — *Macknight*.

¶ *And consent not to wholesome words.* Words or doctrines tending to the quiet and moral health of the community. ¶ *Even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Either words communicated by our Lord to his apostle, or words according to the spirit manifested by our Lord. ¶ *According to godliness.* Tending to peace and piety.

4. *He is proud.* "The idea is, that he has no proper knowledge of the nature of the gospel, and yet he values himself on a fancied superior acquaintance with its principles." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Doting, &c.* Or, *sick*, as in the margin. The Jews were proverbially subject to a morbid desire to discuss abstruse and unprofitable questions. Ch. i. 4. The Targums abound in such fine-spun speculations. ¶ *Envy, strife.* See notes on Rom. i. 29; 1 Cor. iii. 3. ¶ *Railings.* Insolent and reproachful language. ¶ *Evil surmisings.* Unjust suspicions.

5. *Perverse disputings.* Or, *gallings one of another*, as in the margin. ¶ *Supposing that gain is godliness.* "Who think that godliness is a gainful trade." — *Conybeare*. Many suppose the apostle to mean that these Judaizers believed and taught that whatever tended to pecuniary profit should be regarded as true religion. Another interpretation, and very possibly the correct one, is, that "the Judaizers had no view in teaching but to draw money from their disciples." — *Macknight*. ¶ *From such withdraw thyself.* This clause is omitted in some of the MSS., but it is at least very ancient, because it is explained by the early Greek commentators. "He said not,

dispute with them, contend with them, but turn away from them; that is, after the first and second admonition."

— *Theophylact*. It has been well observed, that although, in the foregoing verses, the apostle exhorts servants to be quiet and obedient to their masters, and condemns those who would excite them to insubordination, he does not forbid the most earnest appeals to the masters, to convince them that it is sinful to hold their fellow-men in bondage, and that it is their duty to let them go free.

6. *But godliness with contentment is great gain.* "Here such a skilful turn is given to the foregoing position, as to make it express a weighty truth; — meaning that religion, if accompanied with that contented spirit, which it alone, through a true faith, teaches, produces the truest gain," &c. — *Bloomfield*. "As for that opinion of theirs, that Christianity is an advantageous calling, though it be far from true, nay, impious, in that sense whereunto they apply it, yet in this other it is most orthodox, that a Christian life, with a competent sufficient subsistence, is all the wealth in the world, and much better than a great deal more wealth." — *Hammond*.

7. *For we brought nothing, &c.* A similar sentiment is expressed in Job i. 21, and it is here introduced to enforce the exhortation in the next verse.

8. *And having food and raiment, &c.* The idea is, if our necessary wants be supplied, we should not eagerly desire more. If more be granted, we should accept it with thankfulness, and strive to make a

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have

erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of

profitable use of it, whether for our own mental or moral improvement or physical comfort, or for promoting the welfare of others; but remembering that all earthly possessions and enjoyments must be surrendered at death, we should be content with a moderate competency.

9. *But they that will be rich.* Or, Those who are inordinately anxious to be rich. A determination of the will is implied. ¶ *Fall into temptation and a snare.* Those who earnestly pursue riches are often sorely tempted to dishonesty, and sometimes to the commission of infamous crimes, for the accomplishment of their purpose. They become so involved in the meshes of iniquity, that it is difficult to retrace their steps; and they not unfrequently suffer legal penalties. "The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands." Ps. ix. 16. ¶ *And into many foolish and hurtful lusts.* Desires, such as the love of wealth creates. They are *foolish*, as being not such as an intelligent and immortal being should pursue; and they are *hurtful*, as being injurious to morals, to health, and to the soul." — *Barnes.* ¶ *Which drown men in destruction and perdition.* A strong metaphor, drawn from a ship sinking in the depth of the sea. The ruling desire to be rich "causeth us to make shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience, and whatsoever else is sacred, when they cannot be held without the loss of that wealth we so love and admire; whence Cicero notes 'that there is no duty so holy or solemn, which covetousness is not wont to impair and violate.'" — *Whitby.*

10. *For the love of money is the root of all evil.* "That is, of all kinds of evil. This is evidently not to be

understood as *literally* true, for there are evils which cannot be traced to the love of money, the evils growing out of ambition, and intemperance, and debasing lusts, and of the hatred of God and of goodness. The expression here is evidently a popular saying, 'all sorts of evils grow out of the love of money;' similar expressions often occur in the classic writers. See *Wetstein in loc.* and numerous examples quoted by *Priceus*. Of the truth of this, no one can doubt. No small part of the crimes of the world can be traced to the love of gold. But it deserves to be remarked here, that the apostle does not say that '*money* is the root of all evil,' or that it is an evil at all. It is the '*love*' of it which is the source of evil." — *Barnes.* ¶ *Which while some coveted after.* Evidently referring to some professed Christians, known to Timothy, and cited as examples of the evil. ¶ *Have erred from the faith.* Or, *been seduced from the faith*, as in the margin. They have been seduced into practices utterly inconsistent with the faith which they profess. ¶ *And pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* The necessary consequence of sin is pain and remorse. Sooner or later it befalls every transgressor. The word in the original is very emphatic, signifying to pierce entirely through, as when a spit is thrust through meat for roasting.

11. *Flee these things, &c.* Namely, the allurements of wealth. ¶ *And follow after righteousness, &c.* Practise the virtues which are opposite to the vices before mentioned. See note on Gal. v. 22, 23.

12. *Fight the good fight of faith.* Be faithful in proclaiming the gospel of Christ, and in defending it against

faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep *this* com-

mandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, *who* is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor

the assaults of its adversaries. Be faithful to its spirit, and illustrate it both by word and deed. The imagery is drawn from the Grecian games.

¶ *Lay hold on eternal life.* Secure that blessing which cometh through faith and obedience. See notes on John xvii. 3; 1 Cor. ix. 25. ¶ *Whereunto thou art also called, &c.* That is, to faith in the gospel of Christ, and to all its blessed fruits. It is generally supposed that there is a further allusion to his call to the gospel ministry. ¶ *And hast professed, &c.* He did not attempt to conceal his faith, but proclaimed it openly, and earnestly exhorted others to embrace it. See notes on Acts xx. 27; xxi. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

13. *Who quickeneth all things.* Who gives life to all; the source of all life and energy. ¶ *Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession.* Or, *profession*, as in the margin. Our Lord bore an open testimony to the truth, when arraigned before Pilate, John xviii. 28-40, although he knew that his life was in peril. A more noble example of faithfulness to the truth could not have been presented to Timothy.

14. *Without spot and unrebukeable.* That is, observe and perform what is commanded, so faithfully and conscientiously, that thou mayest be without stain or rebuke. ¶ *Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.* See notes on 1 Thess. iii. 13; v. 2, 3. The apostle frequently referred to a visible manifestation of divine power, at a period then near at hand, when it was of the utmost importance that the disciples should be found faithful in

adherence to the truth, and in the performance of their duty. "Keep close to the evangelical rule, and continue constant without any blemish or blame, without any falling off in time of hazard, as some others are observed to do, until that coming of Christ, so often spoken of and expected according to his promise, for the rescue of his faithful servants, and destruction of the persecutors and the cowardly." — *Hammnd.*

15. *Which in his times, &c.* Which God will manifest at the proper time; but the precise period is known only to him. See note on Matt. xxiv. 36.

16. *Who only hath immortality.* "That is, immortality *self-derived*; implying that he alone can confer it; as it is said, John v. 26, that he 'hath life in himself.'" — *Bloomfield.* The word *ἀθάνατον*, *immortality*, does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, except in 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. "By the attributes mentioned in this verse, God is distinguished from all created natures whatever. He alone hath life without beginning and ending. If any other being hath life without end, it is by his gift. And as life without beginning and ending implies *immutability*, God alone is immutable as well as immortal. Hence he is called ἀφθάρτος Θεός, the 'incorruptible or immutable God,' Rom. i. 23, and ἀφθίσιτος, 'incorruptible, unperishable,' 1 Tim. i. 17. — *Macknight.* ¶ *Dwelling in the light, &c.* "Dwelling in light unapproachable." — *Conybeare.* This figure of speech is common in the Scriptures. ¶ *Whom no man hath seen nor can see.* God may be seen in his works, Ps. xix. 1, 2, or in

can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation

against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen.

¶ The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana.

his representative, John xiv. 9; but personally he is invisible to mortal eyes. See note on John i. 18. ¶ *To whom be honor, &c.* See note on Rom. xi. 36.

17. *That they be not high-minded.* That they be not proud and haughty; that they do not look with contempt upon their poorer brethren. This is one of the sins which "easily beset" "the rich in this world." ¶ *Nor trust in uncertain riches.* Earthly riches are subject to loss by fire, or flood, or war, or other devastations. ¶ *But in the living God, &c.* God liveth always, and can always protect and sustain those who trust in him. He is the giver of "every good gift and every perfect gift," James i. 17, and is more ready to bestow blessings than his children are to ask him. Happy is he that trusteth in the Lord. See note on ch. iv. 10.

18. *That they do good, &c.* The general idea is, that men ought to permit others to share in the blessings of providence, and to equalize the burdens which are sometimes oppressive. See notes on 2 Cor. viii. 13-15.

19. *Laying up in store, &c.* See note on Luke xvi. 9.

20. *Avoiding profane and vain babblings.* See note on ch. i. 4. ¶ *And oppositions of science falsely so called.* "Religion has nothing to fear from true science, and the minister of the gospel is not exhorted to dread that.

It is only false or pretended science that religion has to dread, and which the friend of Christianity is to avoid. The meaning here is, that Timothy was to avoid everything which *falsely* laid claim to being 'knowledge' or 'science.' There was much of this in the world at the time the apostle wrote; and this, more perhaps than anything else, has tended to corrupt true religion since." — *Barnes*. "From this passage we see that the heretics here opposed by St. Paul laid claim to a peculiar philosophy, or *Γνωσις*. Thus they were *Gnostics*, at all events, in name; how far their doctrines agreed with those of the later Gnostics is a farther question. We have before seen that there were those at Corinth (1 Cor. viii. 1, 10, 11) who were blamed by St. Paul for claiming a high degree of *γνώσις*; and we have seen him condemn the *φιλοσοφία* of the heretics at Colossæ (Col. ii. 8) who appear to bear the closest resemblance to those condemned in the pastoral epistles." — *Conybeare*.

21. *Which some professing.* Reference is manifestly had to visible members of the church. ¶ *Have erred concerning the faith.* See note on ver. 10. ¶ *Grace be with thee.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

The subscription, like those to the foregoing epistles, has no canonical authority.

## SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

### CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

### CHAPTER I.

Some commentators regard this as one of the earlier of St. Paul's epistles, and as contemporaneous with those to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and to Philemon. The more general and probably the more correct opinion is, that it was written during the apostle's last imprisonment at Rome, and not long before his martyrdom. It is generally supposed that Timothy was at Ephesus when this epistle was addressed to him. It contains Paul's final exhortations to steadfastness in the profession of faith, to a conscientious performance of every Christian duty, and to an unwavering trust in the living God, "who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Ver. 9, 10.

1. *Paul, an apostle.* See note on Rom. i. 1. ¶ *By the will of God.* See note on 2 Cor. i. 1. ¶ *According to the promise of life, &c.* God had given through his Son a gospel containing

3 I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that

the promise of life; and Paul was called to be an apostle for the promulgation of this glorious promise. See ver. 8-11. And most faithfully and successfully did he perform the duty assigned to him.

2. *To Timothy, my dearly beloved son, &c.* See notes on 1 Tim. i. 2, where similar language occurs.

3. *I thank God.* See note on Rom. i. 8. ¶ *Whom I serve from my forefathers, &c.* According to the example of my forefathers. Compare Acts xxii. 3; xxvi. 4, 5; Phil. iii. 4-6. ¶ *That without ceasing I have remembrance, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 9.

4. *Greatly desiring to see thee.* Paul was in prison and comparatively alone. Most of his former companions had forsaken him, and some of them from unworthy motives. See ch. iv. 10, 16. It was natural that he should desire to see this favorite disciple, whom he styles his "dearly beloved son," ver. 2, not only that he might impart further spiritual instruction, but that his own heart might "be filled with joy," as the fruit of sympathy and love. See note on Rom. i. 11, 12.

5. *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith, &c.* "For I have been reminded of thy undissembled faith.

is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power,

and of love, and of a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling,

Perhaps a message or other incident had reminded St. Paul of some proof which Timotheus had given of the sincerity of his faith (as Bengel thinks); or, still more probably, he was reminded of the faith of Timotheus by its contrast with the cowardice of Demas and others. He mentions it here obviously as a motive to encourage him to persevere in courageous steadfastness." — *Conybeare*. ¶ *Thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice*. Timothy's "father was a Greek," but his mother "was a Jewess, and believed," Acts xvi. 1; his grandmother was probably a Jewess also. He was early instructed by these pious ancestors, and attained faith.

6. *That thou stir up the gift of God, &c.* The word here rendered *stir up* occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It properly signifies to enliven or keep alive a fire. Hence the phrase has been translated, "that thou fan into a flame the divine gift." — *Haweis*. "The grace of God required for any particular office in the early church was conferred after prayer and the laying on of hands. This imposition of hands was repeated whenever any one was appointed to a new office or commission. The reference here may therefore be to the original ordination of Timotheus, or to his appointment to the superintendence of the Ephesian church." — *Conybeare*. See Acts viii. 15-17; ix. 17; xiii. 2-4; xix. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14.

7. *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, &c.* "For God hath not infused into us a spirit of cowardice which shrinks at danger, but of courage, such as becometh those who pos-

sess the gifts of inspiration and miracles, and of benevolence, which disposes us to communicate the gospel to all mankind, and of self-government, to behave with prudence on every occasion. The ministers of the gospel were not animated with the selfish and bigoted spirit of the Jews and Judaizing teachers, who hated all mankind but those of their own nation and religion, and confined salvation to the disciples of Moses." — *Macknight*. The divine Spirit and the love which it calls forth not only inspires courage to meet the assaults of men, but also dispels all slavish fear of God, and fills the heart with trust and confidence. 1 John iv. 17-19.

8. *Be not thou therefore ashamed, &c.* Hesitate not to bear an open testimony to the gospel. Let not persecution, nor even the fear of death, induce thee to be unfaithful to the trust reposed in thee. See Rom. i. 16. ¶ *Nor of me his prisoner*. Of the testimony which I have borne to the truth, in consequence of which I am now imprisoned. ¶ *But be thou partaker, &c.* Shrink not from the trials and persecutions which await the faithful servants of God; but rather meet such afflictions with a calm assurance that God will afford all needful support.

9. *Who hath saved us and called us, &c.* Some suppose there is here a special reference to the *calling* of some to the apostleship, and of others to the ministry. Others, more properly, understand Paul, here as in Rom. i. 7, and 1 Cor. i. 2, to mean, "called to be saints" In the preceding words, he certainly seems to speak of that salvation from sin which Jesus Christ came

not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;

10 But is now made manifest

by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

11 Whereunto I am ap-

to accomplish. See note on Matt. i. 21. "He has brought us into a state in which salvation is so certain, that Paul could speak of it as if it were already done." — *Barnes*. Indeed, it was already partially enjoyed through faith. See notes on John v. 24; 1 Tim. iv. 10. ¶ *Not according to our own works, &c.* "The idea is, that our own works have nothing to do in inducing God to call us. As, when we become Christians, he does not choose us because of our works, so the eternal purpose in regard to our salvation could not have been formed because he foresaw that we would perform such works as would be a reason why he should choose us. The whole arrangement was irrespective of our deserts." — *Barnes*. See notes on Rom. vi. 23; xi. 6; Eph. ii. 8, 9. ¶ *Which was given us, &c.* Was secured to us. That which is absolutely certain of accomplishment is sometimes represented as fully accomplished. See notes on 1 Cor. xv. 27; Heb. ii. 8, 9.

10. *But is now made manifest, &c.* What was certain from eternity "according to God's own purpose and grace," namely, the abolition of death, and the immortal life of his children, was "made manifest," or "brought to light," by the appearing and teaching and the glorious resurrection of his Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ. ¶ *Who hath abolished death.* Who hath made it manifest that death shall certainly be abolished. See note on ver. 9. ¶ *And hath brought life and immortality to light, &c.* The light does not create the objects which it exhibits; but it makes objects visible which before existed. So Jesus did not, so to speak, create the truth of an immortal existence, "through the gospel;" but he revealed, or "brought to light," what was before unknown to men, but what was already certain according to the

purpose and grace of God. "The word *life* here refers undoubtedly to life in the future world. The question was, whether man would live at all; and that question has been determined by the gospel. The word *immortality* means, properly, incorruption, incapacity of decay, and may be applied either to the body or the soul. Many suppose that the phrase "life and immortality," here, is used by hendiadys (two things for one), as meaning immortal or incorruptible life. The gospel thus has truths not found in any other system, and contains what man never would have discovered of himself. As fair a trial had been made among the philosophers of Greece and Rome as could be made, to determine whether the unaided powers of the human mind could arrive at these great truths; and their most distinguished philosophers confessed that they could arrive at no certainty on the subject. In this state of things, the gospel comes and reveals truths worthy of all acceptance; sheds light where man had desired it; solves the great problems which had for ages perplexed the human mind; and discloses to man all that he could wish." — *Barnes*. The following remarks on ver. 9, 10, are worthy of consideration: "At these verses the apostle points at the *chief heads* of sound gospel doctrine, in opposition to the unsound views of the false teachers, meaning, chiefly, it should seem, to impress more strongly on Timothy's mind, that this salvation is not of works, but of grace; a doctrine which the apostle often inculcates (see Eph. ii. 8, and Tit. iii. 5); and it is here very aptly introduced, since there was the more reason for Timothy not to decline persecution and toil in the cause of Him by whom he had been saved wholly by grace." — *Bloomfield*.

11. *Whereunto I am appointed, &c.*

pointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

That is, to proclaim the truths thus "manifested," or "brought to light."

12. *For the which cause I also suffer these things.* That is, I suffer persecution and imprisonment, because I have been faithful in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, ver. 11. ¶ *Nevertheless I am not ashamed.* See note on Rom. i. 16. ¶ *For I know whom I have believed, &c.* Paul trusted in the living God, the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe, 1 Tim. iv. 10, and he had no doubt that God was both able and willing to afford all necessary protection and relief, in the present world, and to restore life to such as sacrificed life in his service. See notes on Rom. viii. 31, 38, 39.

13. *Hold fast the form of sound words, &c.* Adhere closely to the gospel of Jesus Christ as you have received it of me, whether by word or epistle.

14. *That good thing which was committed, &c.* "The reference here in the phrase 'that good thing committed to thee,' is to the sound Christian doctrine with which he had been entrusted, and which he was required to transmit to others." — Barnes.

15. *All they which are in Asia be turned away from me.* Some understand the apostle to mean that the Asiatic Christians in Rome had forsaken him. Others, with apparently better reason, suppose him to refer to the apostasy of many in that part of Asia Minor, near Ephesus, where Tim-

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

17 But, when he was in

othy is understood to have been at that time, and already acquainted with the fact. In either case, the language must be understood with some qualification, because an exception is mentioned in the next verse. ¶ *Phygellus and Hermogenes.* Nothing more is known of these persons.

16. *The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus.* From the whole passage, it may be concluded that this faithful disciple resided at Ephesus, but had been in Rome, and while there, had been kind and helpful to Paul, ver. 16, as he had been previously at Ephesus, ver. 18; but that he had now left Rome, ver. 17, and was on his way home, or more probably, perhaps, journeying elsewhere, as the apostle seems to anticipate his continued absence from home when this epistle should arrive at Ephesus. Ch. iv. 19. For all his kindness Paul prays that blessings might descend on those who were dear to Onesiphorus. ¶ *For he oft refreshed me.* He showed kindness to me and ministered to my necessities. ¶ *Was not ashamed of my chain.* On his first imprisonment at Rome, Paul was bound with a chain, Acts xxviii. 20; and he was probably bound in like manner when a second time imprisoned.

17. *But, when he was in Rome.* It is not known for what purpose he visited Rome; but it would seem that he had accomplished his purpose and



Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

## CHAPTER II.

**T**HOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit

departed when this epistle was written.

18. *He sought me out very diligently.* He was not ashamed or afraid to be known as the friend of the prisoner, or to show kindness to one who was persecuted. See Matt. xxv. 34-36. ¶ *That he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.* Paul had forewarned his brethren, in an earlier epistle, that there would be "a falling away" or apostasy from the faith, after which should be witnessed a remarkable manifestation of divine power, called "that day," the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, his coming, the day of Christ, and other names of kindred character. See 2 Thess. ch. i., ii. He seems here to refer to the same "day," as he previously refers to the same "apostasy," ver. 15, and to express the fervent hope that Onesiphorus might be shielded from the calamities which should then befall the enemies of the Lord. ¶ *He ministered to me at Ephesus.* "This was the home of Onesiphorus, and his family was still there. Ch. iv. 19. When Paul was at Ephesus, it would seem that Onesiphorus had showed him a great kindness. His affection for him did not change when he became a prisoner. True friendship, and especially that which is based on religion, will live in all the vicissitudes of fortune, whether we are in prosperity or adversity; whether in a home of plenty or in a prison." — *Barnes.*

## CHAPTER II.

1. *Thou therefore, &c.* In consideration of the apostasy of many, as related in the foregoing chapter, it was the more necessary that Timothy should be faithful in the trust com-

mitted to him. Because others are unfaithful, so much the more be thou strong. ¶ *Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* "Grace here may signify the office of an evangelist bestowed on Timothy by the grace of Christ; for it is used to signify the office of an apostle, Rom. i. 5; or it may signify the spiritual gifts bestowed on Timothy to fit him for his office. In this sense, the exhortation will be the same with that given him 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6. Or grace may signify the gospel itself, as it does Tit. ii. 11; and the apostle's meaning may be, that Timothy should strongly set forth the great blessings bestowed on mankind through Christ, as they are revealed in the gospel." — *MacKnight.* "The meaning is, be strong, relying on the grace which the Lord Jesus only can impart." — *Barnes.* Either of these interpretations gives a good sense, only remembering, if the last be adopted, that the Father is the original source of that grace which is imparted through the Son.

2. *And the things that thou hast heard of me.* The doctrines of Christianity; the truths revealed in the gospel; for these are the theme of the address. ¶ *Among many witnesses.* "There has been some doubt as to the persons here referred to. It seems best, with Esthius, Beza, Wolf, Rosenmüller, and Heinrich, to understand both the presbyters and others of the congregation present at Timothy's ordination, mentioned at 1 Tim. iv. 14; vi. 12; and 2 Tim. i. 6, which was probably accompanied with a public charge, the substance whereof St. Paul desires may be delivered to others also." — *Bloomfield.* ¶ *The same commit to faithful men, &c.* The ministerial office should not be conferred

thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the af-

fairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 The husbandman that la-

on any except those whose fidelity was unquestioned, and who were "apt to teach." The injunction, "Lay hands suddenly on no man," 1 Tim. v. 22, was of vast importance in the early days of the church. It is equally important now.

3. *Thou therefore endure hardness, &c.* Here, as frequently elsewhere, Paul uses a military phrase, in describing the duty of a Christian. See Eph. vi. 13-17; 1 Tim. vi. 12. In this place, however, the allusion appears to be rather to the endurance of hardships than to the aggressive movements of a soldier. Timothy, like Paul, was "set for the defence of the gospel." Phil. i. 17. Others had deserted their posts, when danger or hardship pressed upon them, ch. i. 15; iv. 16. But Timothy was exhorted to endure persecution with fortitude, and to be faithful in the performance of his duty. Thus would he approve himself as a good soldier of the Lord.

4. *No man that warreth entangleth, &c.* "In his note on this passage Grotius hath showed that the legionary soldiers among the Romans were not suffered to engage in agriculture, merchandise, mechanical employments, or any business which might divert them from their profession. The apostle, by applying the Roman law respecting soldiers to the ministers of the gospel, hath established a Scripture canon, whereby all who undertake the office of the ministry are prohibited from following such secular businesses as engross their attention, and require much time to execute." — *Macknight*. This "Scripture canon," however, must not be enforced too rigidly. It is certainly proper and desirable, and "so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 14. But

if a minister's lot be cast among a people unable or unwilling to supply his temporal wants, rather than starve or beg, he may lawfully devote a portion of his time to some remunerative employment. Or, he may lawfully do this, in order to relieve the burdens of those who are well disposed. In so doing, he may certainly plead respectable precedent; for Paul himself, the author of this "Scripture canon," would not accept maintenance from his disciples, though he asserted his right to it, but ministered to his necessities by the labor of his own hands. See Acts xx. 34; 1 Cor. ix. 11-15. He did not consider it beneath his dignity, nor incompatible with his character as an apostle, to work with his hands in Corinth at tent-making, through the week, during that period when "he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Acts xviii. 3, 4.

5. *And if a man also strive for masteries.* An allusion to the Grecian games. See note on 1 Cor. ix. 25. If a minister of the gospel would be successful, he must be faithful in the performance of his duty.

6. *The husbandman that laboreth, &c.* Or, "The husbandman, laboring first, must be partaker of the fruits," as in the margin. "The husbandman who toils must share the fruits of the ground before the idler. The authorized version, and not its margin, is here correct." — *Conybeare*. Most commentators, however, prefer the marginal reading, as more in accordance with the general scope of the whole passage. "The literal meaning is, it is necessary that the husbandman should first labor, and then enjoy the fruits of his labor." — *Bloomfield*. "According to the marginal reading, the word *first* is introduced in connec-

boureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my gospel:

tion with the word labor; 'laboring first, must be partaker.' That is, it is a great law that the husbandman must work before he receives a harvest. This sense will accord with the purpose of the apostle. It was to remind Timothy that labor must precede reward; that if a man would reap, he must sow; that he could hope for no fruits, unless he toiled for them. Thus understood, this would be an encouragement to Timothy to persevere in his toils, looking onward to his reward. The Greek will bear this construction, though it is not the most obvious one." — *Barnes*.

7. *Consider what I say.* Namely, what is said in ver. 1-13. ¶ *The Lord give thee understanding in all things.* "Thus, having laid Timothy's duty before him, under the metaphor of a soldier, a wrestler, and a husbandman, he counsels him to consider what he had said to him, and desires of God to give him a right understanding and sound judgment in all things; intimating that they that will have God's word and good counsel blessed by God to their understanding and practice must ponder upon it, consider of it, and duly apply it to themselves." — *Poole*.

8. *Remember that Jesus Christ, &c.* "The apostle seems to say whatever tribulations or deaths may befall us, let us remember that Jesus Christ, who was slain by the Jews, rose again from the dead, and his resurrection is the proof and pledge of ours. We, also, shall rise again to a life of glory and blessedness. The false teachings of Hymeneus and Philetus (ver. 17) stated that the resurrection was past already. Paul preached the resurrection from the dead, and founded his doctrine on the resurrection and prom-

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

ise of Christ. This was *his gospel*; the other was of a different nature." — *Clarke*. ¶ *Of the seed of David.* This was one of the characteristics of the Messiah, as foretold by the ancient prophets. See note on Rom. i. 4.

9. *Wherein.* On account of "my gospel." Ver. 8. That is, on account of my preaching Jesus and the resurrection, to both Jews and Gentiles. ¶ *I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds.* I am treated as a malefactor, and am imprisoned, bound with a chain. ¶ *But the word of God is not bound.* "This is one of Paul's happy turns of thought. Compare Acts xxvi. 29. The meaning is plain. The gospel was prospered. That could not be fettered and imprisoned. It circulated with freedom, even when he who was appointed to preach it was in chains. See Phil. i. 13, 14." — *Barnes*. Very probably, when this epistle was written, as during his first imprisonment, Paul was permitted to preach the gospel, and had full liberty of speech, though his limbs were bound. See notes on Acts xxviii. 30, 31. And so, at an earlier day, persecution and imprisonment did not prevent the preaching of the gospel. See Acts iv. 18-20; v. 17-21; and notes on Acts viii. 1-4.

10. *For the elect's sake.* For the sake of the church, or of Christian believers, who are often styled "the elect," in the Scriptures. See note on Rom. viii. 33. "Meaning, as the best commentators are agreed, those who were called to receive the gospel, especially the Gentiles, of whom St. Paul was especially the apostle." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *That they may also obtain the salvation, &c.* That by hearing the gospel, and believing it, they

11 *It is a faithful saying*: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us;

13 If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

14 Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive

might enter into the present enjoyment of the salvation therein revealed through Jesus Christ. See notes on John iii. 15; v. 24; xvii. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 4; iv. 10.

11. *If we be dead with him, &c.* See note on Rom. vi. 8.

12. *If we suffer, &c.* See note on Rom. viii. 17. ¶ *If we deny him, &c.* See note on Matt. x. 33.

13. *If we believe not, &c.* The unbelief of man affects not the truth of God. See notes on Rom. iii. 3, 4. God "abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." What he hath purposed he will accomplish; what he hath promised he will perform. "God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Numb. xxiii. 19. See also, Heb. vi. 16-20.

14. *Of these things.* Of all the grounds of faith and principles of action before mentioned. ¶ *That they strive not about words, &c.* See note on 1 Tim. vi. 3. "The general sense is, that controversies which turn on some nice distinctions in *words*, rather than involve differences in things, are to be avoided, not merely as useless, but as tending to subvert the faith of the hearers; since they may thus doubt of the truth of that gospel about which the contending parties cannot agree." — *Bloomfield*.

15. *Study to shew thyself approved unto God.* Endeavor to obtain the approval of God by faithful performance of duty. Let not the hope of applause or the fear of persecution

not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers.

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as

from your fellow-men divert you from your duty to God. ¶ *A workman that needeth not to be ashamed.* Whoso faithfully performs his duty, according to the best knowledge of it which he can obtain, has no cause for shame. ¶ *Rightly dividing the word of truth.* "Declaring the word of truth without distortion." — *Conybeare*. Cutting straight the word of truth, that is, rightfully and skilfully teaching it." — *Robinson*. The word translated *rightly dividing*, does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. "Literally, who rightly cutteth up the word; in allusion to the action of the priest who opened and divided the sacrifice; or rather, of one who carves at table, and distributes meat to the guests, according to their ages and their state of health. In this manner, the apostle himself divided the word to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iii. 2; 'milk I gave you and not meat, for ye were not then able to bear it.' The Vulgate Version paraphrases this very well, — recte tractantem, — rightly handling." — *Macknight*.

16. *But shun profane, &c.* See note on 1 Tim. i. 4. ¶ *For they will increase, &c.* "For they will proceed to greater lengths of impiety." — *Haweis*. "Though the evil of some of them may not immediately appear, and they may seem trifling rather than mischievous, they will at length advance unto more impiety." — *Doddridge*. The same idea is illustrated by a vivid metaphor in ver. 17.

17. *And their word will eat as doth a canker.* Or, *gangrene*, as in the margin. The word γάγγραινα, from which *gan-*

doth a canker : of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus ;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already ;

*grene* is derived, does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. "The words 'will eat' mean will have nutriment; that is, will spread over and consume the healthful parts. It will not merely destroy the parts immediately affected, but will extend into the surrounding healthy parts, and destroy them also. So it is with erroneous doctrines. They will not merely eat out the truth in the particular matter to which they refer, but they will also spread over and corrupt other truths. The doctrines of religion are closely connected, and are dependent on each other, like the different parts of the human body. One cannot be corrupted without affecting those adjacent to it, and, unless checked, the corruption will soon spread over the whole." — *Barnes*. Not only in the apostolic age, but in the present century, melancholy examples may be found of this sad truth. Attempting to be wise beyond what is written, and indulging in "vain babblings," or "words to no profit," ver. 14, many have departed farther and farther from the faith, until they retain little or nothing of Christianity, except the name; and some have renounced even the name of Christian. ¶ *Of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus*. "The apostle mentions these two by name, as profane, empty babblers whom the faithful were to resist, because their errors were of the most dangerous nature, as is evident from the account which he gives of them in the next verse. And because Hymeneus, in particular, had spoken disrespectfully of Christ, the apostle found it necessary to deliver him to Satan. 1 Tim. i. 20. Philetus is mentioned nowhere else in Scripture. Perhaps these teachers denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, see 1 John iv. 3; consequently denied the reality both of his death and of his resurrection." — *Macknight*.

18. *Saying that the resurrection is past*

and overthrow the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth

*already, &c.* "It is probable they taught that there was no other resurrection but the spiritual rising of the soul from the death of sin; or the renovation of the condition of the world under the gospel, according as the word resurrection is sometimes taken." — *Assemb. Annot.* "By allegorical expressions of Scripture have persuaded themselves and others, that there is no farther resurrection, nor consequently future state to be expected (see 1 Cor. xv. 12), but that all the places that sound that way are otherwise (after the Gnostic cabalistical manner) to be interpreted, and have been so successful as to persuade some thus to believe them, and have gained some followers in this impious doctrine." — *Hammond*. "They have, by their allegorical interpretations, explained away one of the most fundamental doctrines of our religion, asserting that the resurrection, of which it so largely speaks, consists only in a conversion from vice to virtue, and consequently is already past, with regard to all true Christians." — *Doddridge*. Many other commentators give substantially the same interpretation.

19. *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure*. Or, *steady*, as in the margin. The connection with the preceding verse seems to be this: whatever may be the influence of these false teachers, and however they may subvert or "overthrow the faith of some," yet the foundation of God stands firm and unshaken. The unbelief of man cannot destroy the faithfulness of God. Rom. iii. 3. He has promised the resurrection of the dead, and he will perform his promise. Interpreters differ concerning the meaning of the *foundation* here mentioned: "some understanding by it the doctrine of the resurrection, whereon principally God has meant the truth of the gospel to be built; others, Christ himself; and others again, the

them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the

name of Christ depart from iniquity.

promise of eternal salvation through Christ. Of which expositions, the second and third, though they are not a little specious, and have much to recommend them in other parts of Scripture, yet they have little support from (nay, the second may be said to run counter to) the context, which is strongly in favor of the first, that is, the resurrection of the dead." — *Bloomfield*. "The fundamental doctrine of the resurrection to life eternal is so styled in these words: 'Let us not lay again the foundation of the resurrection of the dead.' Heb. vi. 1, 2. This is the faithful saying mentioned ver. 11, which he exhorts Timothy to bring to their remembrance, ver. 14, and by denying which, saith he, the Christian faith is overturned, ver. 18. But notwithstanding all the vain babblings of Hymeneus and Philetus, this foundation, saith the apostle, standeth sure." — *Whitby*. ¶ *Having this seal*. Having styled the resurrection of the dead a fundamental doctrine of the gospel, the foundation-stone, so to speak, on which the gospel edifice rests, the apostle extends the metaphor by an allusion to the seal, or device, or inscription, anciently engraved on such a stone. "In common language, a seal signifies not only the seal itself with its inscription, but the figure that is made by the seal when impressed on some soft substance. A seal, in the sense of a *figure with an inscription*, was no unusual thing on a foundation-stone, even in ancient times: 'For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold I will engrave the graving thereof.' Zech. iii. 9." — *Macknight*. The two sentences which follow seem to be represented as inscriptions on the foundation-stone, or as the seal by which the foundation is authenticated as sure and steadfast. ¶ *The Lord knoweth them that are his*. "That is, he owns and approves those he hath commissioned to reveal his mind to others; for this expression is taken from Numb. xvi. 5, where Korah, Da-

than, and Abiram rise up against Moses and Aaron, declaring they took too much upon them, in pretending the one to be their prophet and the mouth of God to them, the other to be the high priest whom God had consecrated to his peculiar service above all others of the tribe of Levi. Now to this imputation Moses replies, according to the Septuagint, 'God knoweth who are his,' and by him separated to his service, and will maintain their cause and calling against all opposers; as in that instance he did in a wonderful manner, causing the earth to open and swallow them up; so also will God own us his apostles against Hymeneus and Philetus, and all that set up against us and our doctrine. As, therefore, Moses said then to the Israelites, 'Depart you from the tents of those men, and they departed, so say I now to all Christians, let them depart from this impiety, that is, from these pernicious doctrines which increase unto ungodliness, and cause men to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.'" — *Whitby*. ¶ *Depart from iniquity*. "The opposition of the heretical teachers to the apostles was as real a rebellion against God, as the opposition of Korah and his company to Moses, and was as certainly to be punished. Wherefore, to the safety of the faithful, it was as necessary that they should depart from these heretical teachers, as it was to the safety of the Israelites that they should depart from the tents of Korah and his accomplices. To show this, and to make the heretical teachers sensible of the destruction that was coming upon them, the apostle represents a command similar to that given by Moses to the Israelites as written on the apostles, the foundation-stones of the church of God: 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;' let them depart from wicked teachers, lest they be involved in their punishment." — *Macknight*. Commentators have differed much in opinion concerning this confessedly

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified,

and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

difficult passage. From the great variety of interpretations I have selected what seems to me most reasonable.

20. *Some to honor, and some to dishonor.* See note on Rom ix. 21. The idea seems to be, that in the church, while many teachers are faithful and adhere closely to the truth, others, like Hymeneus and Philetus, imbibe and teach error, and thus "overthrow the faith of some." Ver. 18. The same is true concerning private members of the church; but the context indicates that teachers are specially intended.

21. *If a man therefore purge himself from these.* "If a man cleanse, or purify himself. The word *these* refers here to the persons represented by the vessels of wood and of earth, the vessels made to dishonor, as mentioned in the previous verse. The idea is, that if one would preserve himself from the corrupting influence of such men, he would be fitted to be a vessel of honor, or to be employed in the most useful and honorable service in the cause of his master." — *Barnes*.

22. *Flee also youthful lusts.* The common explanation is, that, Timothy being then a young man, and of "like passions" with others, the apostle admonished him to guard carefully against those temptations, which otherwise might involve him in guilt and bring scandal upon the church. This is certainly the most natural meaning of the words, and might be accepted without hesitation as the true meaning, were it not that the whole context seems to refer to heresy rather than immorality. But, as many suppose, the importance of the subject may have induced the apostle, as frequently on other occasions, to interpose this very important caution in the midst of a discourse on a different, though per-

haps kindred, subject. To avoid the apparent difficulty, Gilpin suggests that the apostle intended "novel doctrines" by the words which are translated "youthful lusts," and says, "if the terms allow this interpretation, the context seems to require it. The whole tenor of the chapter opposes rather erroneous doctrines than impure practices." Other interpretations are given in what follows, both of which are worthy of consideration. "The apostle does not mean sensual lusts only, but ambition, pride, love of power, rashness, and obstinacy; vices which some teachers who are free from sensual lusts are at little pains to avoid."

— *Macknight*. "This is not, I think, to be interpreted of *lusts* properly so called; such a sense being foreign to the context, and to the character of the person addressed; and the *abstinence* elsewhere ascribed to Timothy excludes the idea of *sensuality*. It would seem that the apostle means to denote those vehement, impetuous, and headstrong passions, mostly found in young men, but which are sometimes found in middle age, which Timothy had nearly reached, and accordingly against which the apostle here cautions him; and, *through* him, *other* ministers, both young and middle-aged, as well as Timothy. Now, when we consider that it was rashness, vanity, and rage for controversy and novelty, that had hurried Hymeneus and Philetus into those baneful errors, against which the apostle here cautions Timothy, the suitability of the present admonition will be very apparent." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *But follow righteousness, &c.* "The general meaning here is, that he was to practise all that is good and virtuous. He was to practise *righteousness*, or jus-

23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient;

tice and equity, in all his dealings with men; *faith*, or fidelity in his duties; *charity*, or love to all men; *peace*, or harmony and concord with all others. What virtues could be more appropriate for a minister of the gospel?"—*Barnes*. It is not unlikely, however, that special reference is had to the manner in which he ought to discharge his ministerial office; that shunning all dishonesty and deceptive arts, he ought to preach the truth in love, and thus strive to promote peace among the followers of Christ.

23. *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid*, &c. See notes on ver. 16; 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; vi. 4.

24. *And the servant of the Lord must not strive*. Or, must not *fight*, or figuratively, must not be quarrelsome, must not manifest ill-temper towards opposers. The word here translated *strive* occurs only in John vi. 52; Acts vii. 26; and James iv. 2; in all which places violent and angry contention is indicated. In the good sense of the words, for the faith of the gospel," Phil. i. 27, ministers and private Christians not only may but should "*strive* together and "*contend* for the faith once delivered to the saints." Jude 3. In such a warfare Paul was engaged from his conversion until his martyrdom; and his Master and ours devoted his energies to a similar contest, with a like result. Such examples are worthy of imitation. The spirit in which we should perform our duty as soldiers of the cross is indicated in what follows. ¶ *But be gentle unto all men*. "In this and the following verse, the apostle seems to have had Christ's example as a teacher in his eye, proposing it as a model to all who are employed in teaching. The virtues here mentioned our Lord generally exercised in teaching; yet, on some occasions, he de-

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of

parted from his usual mildness, and with great severity reprov'd notorious sinners, such as the Scribes and Pharisees. In the same manner the prophets and apostles used strong speech in checking obstinate offenders; while those who showed any candor and honesty in their opposition to the gospel, they instructed with the greatest meekness, agreeably to the canon mentioned, ver. 25."—*Macknight*.

25. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*. "This seems to refer to those who oppose the apostle's authority; and hence the propriety of the allusion to the rebellion of Korah and his company."—*Clarke*. "Meaning, not those who oppose the gospel itself, but those who oppose his views of it."—*Bloomfield*. Either of these interpretations gives a good sense; but I prefer the more common explanation, as follows: "With great calmness and temper dealing with those that are of different opinions from us, though in opposing us they oppose the truth, as counting it not impossible or hopeless, but that by the grace of God they may be brought to repentance, and so come to acknowledge the truth at length."—*Hammond*. But although we are bound to be gentle towards them who oppose the gospel, and in the spirit of meekness to instruct them, we are not bound to fellowship them nor to countenance their errors. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; Tit. iii. 10.

26. *Snare of the devil*. "The snare of the devil, out of which the opposers of the gospel are to be taken alive by the servant of the Lord, signifies those prejudices and errors, and habits of sensuality, which hindered both Jews and Gentiles, in the first age, from attending to the evidences of the gospel."—*Macknight*. Or we may understand, by the snare of the



the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

## CHAPTER III.

**T**HIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of

devil, the wily and deceptive arts of false teachers, and calumniators of the gospel. See notes on 1 Tim. iii. 6, 7, 11; 2 Tim. iii. 3.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *In the last days.* See note on 1 Tim. iv. 1. ¶ *Perilous times shall come.* "Times of danger, of persecution, and of trial. On the general meaning of this passage, and the general characteristics of those times, the reader may consult the notes on 2 Thess. ii. 1-12, and 1 Tim. iv. 1-3. There can be no doubt that in all these passages the apostle refers to the same events." — *Barnes.*

2. *Lovers of their own selves.* That love of self which prompts one to seek his own highest happiness, without trenching in any degree upon the rights and comfort of others, is not only allowable, but it is implanted in the heart of men as a proper stimulus to action, and is made the measure of love to others in the second great commandment. Matt. xxii. 39. Sinful love of self, or selfishness, is that which prompts one to disregard and trample upon the rights and happiness of others in the gratification of his own desires. ¶ *Covetous.* Lovers of money. See note on 1 Tim. vi. 10. ¶ *Boasters, proud.* See note on Rom. i. 30. ¶ *Blasphemers.* Or, railers; opposers speaking reproachfully of the gospel. See note on Matt. ix. 3. ¶ *Disobedient to parents.* See note on Rom. i. 30. ¶ *Unthankful.* The word used here does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament, except in Luke vi. 35. It indicates one of the most base sins. It is not beyond the mercy of God, but sadly needs its exercise. ¶ *Unholy.* See note on 1 Tim. i. 9.

their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, highminded-

3. *Without natural affection.* See note on Rom. i. 31. ¶ *Truce-breakers.* The same word is translated *implacable* in Rom. i. 31. ¶ *False accusers.* "The Greek word used here is *διάβολοι*, devils, the primitive meaning of which is calumniator, slanderer, accuser. Compare notes on 1 Tim. iii. 11, where the word is rendered *slanderers*." — *Barnes.* ¶ *Incontinent.* "Intemperate." — *Haweis.* "Unable to control their passions. The word is probably used here in a secondary sense. The context has no reference to sexual passions, which some commentators suppose to be here indicated; "this is a sense wholly unsupported by proof. The expression would rather seem to mean *intemperantes*, having no mastery over their passions and affections, literally, *unreined*, — ungovernable in impetuosity. This trait consorts well with the *προπετείς*, just after, meaning headlong, rash; implying the absence of all restraint in laws, whether human or divine." — *Bloomfield.* ¶ *Fierce.* Harsh, severe, cruel. ¶ *Despisers of those that are good.* Men who are abandoned to sin generally despise or hate those who endeavor to obey the divine law, and frequently revile and calumniate them. It has been suggested that this characteristic may have been added by the apostle to develop more fully the idea conveyed by the previous appellation of "false accusers," or devils.

4. *Traitors.* False to their fealty, whether to friends, or to country. ¶ *Heady.* "Headlong with passion." — *Conybeare.* "Falling forwards, prone, inclined, ready to do anything. In a bad sense, precipitate, headlong, rash." — *Robinson.* ¶ *Highminded.* The same word is translated "lifted up with pride." 1 Tim. iii. 6. See note on

ed, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and

lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jam-

Rom. xii. 3. ¶ *Lovers of pleasures, &c.* "By the pleasure here spoken of may be meant sensual gratification in general. Probably, however, the apostle intended chiefly to denote 'a dissipated spirit,' and 'an inordinate fondness for pleasure,' whatever that might be; though, in some cases, it might not, in due measure, be of a very censurable kind. With this view the words following, at ver. 5, are very consistent, as denoting a mere *profession* of the gospel, and an attention only to its *external* forms, with little or no influence on the heart and life." — *Bloomfield*.

5. *Having a form of godliness, &c.* "That is, they profess religion, or are in connection with the church. This shows that the apostle referred to some great corruption in the church; and there can be little doubt that he had his eye on the same great apostasy to which he refers in 2 Thess. ii., and 1 Tim. iv." — *Barnes*. "Not the true form and essence of godliness, but an outward conformation thereunto, a resemblance, vizard, or show of godliness; men's religion consisting in a formal profession of godliness, Tit. i. 16, without expressing the power and efficacy thereof in their lives; or, in external gestures, behaviors, rites, and ceremonies, without the pure inward worship of God in spirit and truth." — *Assemb. Annot.* ¶ *From such turn away.* See note on 2 Cor. vi. 17; 2 Thess. iii. 6.

6. *For of this sort are they which creep into houses, &c.* "Who go slyly and insidiously into families. They are not open and manly in endeavoring to propagate their views, but they endeavor by their address to ingratiate themselves first with weak women, and through them to influence men. Comp. Tit. i. 11. The word translated 'creep into' is rendered by *Doddridge*,

*insinuate themselves*; by *Bloomfield*, *wind their way into*, in the manner of serpents; by *Bretschneider*, *deceitfully enter*; by *Robinson and Passow*, *go in, enter in*. It is not certain that the idea of deceit or cunning is contained in the word, yet the whole complexion of the passage implies that they made their way by art and deceitful tricks." — *Barnes*. "This temper has begun to appear in many of our contemporaries, of which number are those artful deceivers, who insinuate themselves into houses, and are especially successful in their attempts to captivate inconsiderate women, of low rank and mean understanding, yet easily inflamed with passionate zeal; being indeed, whatever pretences they may make to sanctity, laden with sins, and led aside by various lusts, which these seducers know how to flatter in such a manner as to make them their own property." — *Doddridge*. The apostle made no such invidious distinction of *rank* as is implied in this otherwise judicious note. ¶ *Led away with divers lusts.* "With various kinds of passions or desires, such as pride, vanity, the love of novelty, or a susceptibility to flattery, so as to make them an easy prey to deceivers." — *Barnes*. See note on ch. ii. 22. The fashionable classes are quite as subject as others to such passions.

7. *Ever learning, &c.* This is said concerning the women mentioned in ver. 6. "These are devoted to the false teachers, on pretence of always learning; but they are never able to come to the knowledge of truth, because their teachers industriously hide it from them." — *Macknight*.

8. *Jannes and Jambres.* These are not mentioned by name elsewhere in the Scriptures; but it is said that their names frequently appear in the

bres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

Jewish writings, as two of the magicians in Egypt, who endeavored, by imitating the mighty works of Moses, to neutralize their effect upon Pharaoh and the people. So these false teachers resisted Paul by claiming equal authority and equal power. Thus they resisted the truth, and endeavored to establish their own false dogmas in place of it. ¶ *Men of corrupt minds.* "It appears as if the apostle were referring still to some Judaizing teachers, who were perverting the church with their doctrines, and loudly calling in question the authority and doctrine of the apostle."—*Clarke*. ¶ *Reprobate concerning the faith.* Or, "of no judgment," as in the margin. Disapproved like base metal; not worthy of confidence; not safe guides. See note on Rom. i. 28.

9. *But they shall proceed no further, &c.* In the providence of God, error, like sin, has its limit. The wrath of man is made subservient to the accomplishment of the divine plan, and beyond that point it shall be restrained. Ps. lxxvi. 10. "In regard to the time to which the apostle referred in this description, it has already been observed (note on ver. 1) that it was probably to that great apostasy of the 'latter days' which he has described in 2 Thess. ii., and 1 Tim. iv. But there seems to be no reason to doubt that he had his eye immediately on some persons who had appeared then, and who had evinced some of the traits which would characterize the great apostasy, and whose conduct showed that the great 'falling away' had already commenced. In 2 Thess. ii. 7, he says that the 'mystery of iniquity' was already at work, or was even then manifesting itself; and there can be no doubt that the apostle saw that there had then commenced

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out

what he knew would yet grow up into the great defection from the truth. In some persons, at that time, who had the form of godliness, but who denied its power; who made use of insinuating arts to proselyte the weak and credulous; who endeavored to imitate the true apostles, perhaps by attempting to work miracles, as Jannes and Jambres did; he saw the germ of what was yet to grow up into so gigantic a system of iniquity as to overshadow the world. Yet he consoled Timothy with the assurance that there was a point, beyond which the system of error would not be allowed to go, but where its folly must be seen, and where it would be arrested."—*Barnes*. This long note is inserted, not only as explanatory of this verse, but because it so distinctly admits and affirms that the whole passage has relation to events which were near at hand when it was written, and were in fact then commencing.

10. *But thou hast fully known, &c.* For the encouragement of Timothy, to bear with fortitude the trials which were approaching, the apostle mentions his own example, the persecutions which he had suffered, and his deliverance from them, without sacrificing one jot of his faith in the gospel, his devotion to its ministry, his resolute purpose to evangelize the Gentiles, his long-suffering in regard to the evil intentions of his opposers, his charity or love for those whom Christ came to save notwithstanding their present stubbornness and iniquity, and the calm patience under all discouragements, which a confident trust in God inspired. As he had suffered so much, and yet held fast his integrity, so might his disciple hope for similar preservation.

11. *Persecutions, afflictions, &c.* In

of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and

this verse Paul enumerates some of the persecutions and afflictions which he had endured in fulfilling the work of the apostleship. ¶ *At Antioch.* Namely, at "Antioch in Pisidia." Acts xiii. 14, 45, 50. ¶ *At Iconium.* Acts xiv. 1-5. ¶ *At Lystra.* Acts xiv. 6, 19. ¶ *But out of them all the Lord delivered me.* As is fully related in the several places before mentioned.

12. Yea, and all that will live godly, &c. "Yea, and at such times as these, when Christianity is so violently opposed by the unconverted Jews, it is to be expected by all that resolve on a true, constant, Christian course, that it shall infallibly bring persecution upon them."—*Hammond.* "Especially in such perilous times; and at all times, either openly or secretly, from the hatred and malice of wicked men, or from their taunts and calumnies, which are styled persecutions, Gal. iv. 29."—*Whitby.* Our Lord forewarned his disciples that such violent and rancorous opposition must be expected by all who would serve him faithfully, affecting their good name, their temporal happiness, and even their lives. See notes on Matt. v. 11; xvi. 24; John xvi. 2. This was especially true in that day, when the foundations of Judaism and Heathenism were shaken and overturned by the gospel, and the advocates of the old systems were filled with mingled terror and rage. Similar opposition and persecution may be expected in any age, by those who resolutely attempt to abolish long-standing abuses, to reclaim men from deep-seated vices, or, like our Lord and his apostles, to correct the opinions of men upon the important subject of religion, by substituting truth for falsehood. To the shame of Christendom, persecution for the gospel's sake has destroyed many lives; and in its milder forms has made sad

worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*;

havoc of reputation and the ordinary comforts of life.

13. *But evil men and seducers, &c.* "Wicked men and impostors."—*Conybeare.* "That the impostors among the Jews continued till the very time of the destruction of Jerusalem, more and more deceiving the people, and that the whole nation of the unbelieving Jews grew then to the highest pitch of wickedness, Josephus fully asserts."—*Whitby.* "Here there is an indirect admonition to Timothy to go forward in the right path, from strength to strength, and from righteousness to righteousness, as the 'bad men,' false teachers in question, will go on from bad to worse. The next word some eminent commentators take to mean, that 'as they deceive some, so are they themselves the dupes of others.' But though that might sometimes be the case, the words are, I conceive, meant to suggest *how* it happened that they went from bad to worse; namely, by the influence of self-deception as well as that of deceiving others; for men are observed to repeat falsities, till they almost believe them themselves."—*Bloomfield.*

14. *But continue thou in the things, &c.* Namely, in the truths of religion. Compared with what follows in ver. 15, the idea seems to be, that Timothy had learned some of the essential truths of religion from the Old Testament, in his youth, which had been explained and enforced by Paul, who taught him the more spiritual truths of the gospel. ¶ *Knowing of whom thou hast learned them.* Namely, of his mother and grandmother, and of Paul himself. Ch. i. 5, 13.

15. *And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures.* "The apostle calls the writings of the Old Testament sacred, because of their divine inspiration, mentioned ver. 16. Timo-

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

thy's mother and grandmother, being Jewish women of great piety, had trained him up from his childhood in the knowledge and belief of the writings of Moses and the prophets. And their care in thus instructing him being commended by the apostle, it shows us that little children ought to be made acquainted with the Scriptures as early as possible; and that they may derive much benefit even from that imperfect knowledge of the Scriptures and of the principles of religion which they are capable of attaining in their tenderest years." — *Macknight*. ¶ *Wise unto salvation*. See note on John v. 39. ¶ *Through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. "The apostle doth not say that these Scriptures were of themselves sufficient to make Timothy wise unto salvation, but only that with faith in Christ Jesus they were sufficient for that end. Now, faith in Christ Jesus doth only signify a firm belief that Jesus was the Christ, the true Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; as is evident from these words: 'This is the victory over the world, even our faith,' 1 John v. 4, that is, our belief that 'Jesus is the Son of God,' ver. 5. Hence then I argue for the perfection of the Scriptures thus: If the Scriptures of the Old Testament were sufficient to make a man wise unto salvation, provided only that he believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament must much more be so, because the Scriptures of the New Testament must needs more plainly and fully contain the faith and duty of all Christians than the Scriptures of the Old only can be supposed to do." — *Whitby*.

16. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*. Namely, the *Scripture* of which the apostle had just spoken in ver. 15, or the writings of the Old Testament. Some think the translators improperly inserted the word *is*; but, so far as the

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

construction of the sentence is concerned, I see no more objection to its insertion here than there is to its use in the next clause before the word "profitable," where it again appears in *italic* letters; and as to the doctrine or the fact declared, I see no reason why the Scriptures of the Old Testament may not as well be called *inspired* here, as *holy* or *sacred* in ver. 15. "Grotius translates the words, 'the whole divinely-inspired Scripture is profitable,' &c., which they will undoubtedly bear; and as we may be sure that, by *Scripture*, the apostle means the books which the Jews received as canonical, that version gives a true sense; but I take this, which is our own, to be more literal." — *Doddridge*. The phrase, *given by inspiration of God*, "is expressed in the original by one word, *θεόπνευστος*. This word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It properly means 'God-inspired,' from *θεός*, God, and *πνέω*, to breathe, to breathe out. The idea of breathing upon, or breathing into the soul, is that which the word naturally conveys. Thus God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life, Gen. ii. 7, and thus the Saviour breathed on his disciples, and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' John xx. 22. The idea seems to have been, that the life was in the breath, and that an intelligent spirit was communicated with the breath. The question as to the *degree* of inspiration, and whether it extends to the *words* of Scripture, and how far the sacred writers were left to the exercise of their own faculties, is foreign to the design of these notes. All that is necessary to be held is, that the sacred writers were kept from error on those subjects which were matters of their own observation, or which pertained to memory; and that there were truths imparted to them directly by the Spirit of God, which they could never have arrived at by the

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

#### CHAPTER IV.

**I** CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus

unaided exercise of their own minds." *Barnes.* ¶ *And is profitable for doctrine, &c.* The Jewish Scriptures "may by us be profitably made use of, to teach us many things that Christ hath taught us, to convince us of the grossness of many sins which are confidently practised among men, to reduce those that fall through error or ignorance, to build up those that have begun and set out in the way of righteousness." — *Hammond.*

17. *That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished, &c.* Sufficiently instructed in the way of his duty, and guided and stimulated in the performance of good works.

#### CHAPTER IV.

1. *Who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.* The apostle seems here to refer to the same period which he elsewhere calls "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," "the day of the Lord," the revealing or manifestation of the Lord, "that day," &c. See notes on 1 Thess. ii. 19; v. 1-3; iii. 13; 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. i. 18. Our Lord foretold "his appearing and his kingdom," and for the same purpose, namely, to execute judgment, when he said: "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, here be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. xvi. 27, 28. The time indicated by these various phrases was near at hand when this epistle was written; and in view of the distinction then to be made between the friends and the enemies of the gospel, and the righteous retribution to be rendered to both, in view of the ap-

pearing and his kingdom; Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

proaching manifestation of Christ's power and authority in the establishment of the gospel and the overthrow of all opposition, the apostle solemnly charges Timothy to be faithful in the performance of his whole duty. The phrase, "quick and dead," occurs only here and in Acts x. 42; 1 Pet. iv. 5. It may be understood to indicate the converted and the unconverted. See notes on Acts x. 42; Eph. ii. 1; or the Jews and Gentiles, who are sometimes contrasted as the living and dead. The following remarks on 1 Pet. iv. 5, exhibit this aspect of the case: "They shall give account of these irregularities to him who is prepared to judge both the Jews and the Gentiles. The Gentiles, previously to the preaching of the gospel among them, were reckoned to be dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1-5, under the sentence of death, because they had sinned. The Jews had at least, by their religious profession, a name to live; and by that profession were bound to live to God." — *Clarke.*

2. *Preach the word, &c.* "Preach the word of God with all possible seriousness and earnestness; be instant in the prosecution of that good work in the stated season of religious assemblies and out of that season, when occasional providences may give thee an opportunity; yea, carry it into thy private conversation, in the intervals of thy public labors. Endeavor to convince the consciences of men and to reclaim them from their erroneous principles; rebuke them for their irregularities and vices, without fearing the face of any; and exhort them to diligence and zeal in the performance of their duty, with all *long-suffering*, though thou mayest not immediately see the desired success; and enforce these exhortations with all those well-known and important motives which the doc-

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away

their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

6 For I am now ready to be

trine of the gospel may suggest."—*Doddridge*.

3. *For the time will come.* See note on ch. iii. 1. The same time is manifestly intended here. ¶ *When they will not endure sound doctrine.* In the time of the apostasy or "falling away," 2 Thess. ii. 3, men would depart from the truth, would not abide by the sound doctrine of the gospel, but would seek for something more gratifying. Our Lord predicted the appearance of false teachers, who should deceive the people, in these same last days. Matt. xxiv. 24. And thus it has been in all ages of the church. Many who claim to be Christians will not abide the preaching of the doctrines of the gospel, but insist on hearing only practical discourses; as if any rule of practice or system of morality could be maintained and enforced, which is not founded on some of the doctrines of the gospel. Others imagine that they have outgrown the gospel, and have no need of its precepts. The condition of such a one is sad and pitiable, — well-nigh hopeless. See Prov. xxvi. 12. ¶ *But after their own lusts.* "According to their several fancies or caprices."—*Bloomfield*. We need not necessarily understand sensual lusts; indeed, the word is sometimes used in a good sense. It was used by our Lord, Luke xxii. 15, and by Paul, Phil. i. 23, in both cases translated *desire*, and in both cases expressing a good desire. In the present case, however, the context indicates that improper desires are intended. ¶ *Itching ears.* "That is, wishing to be gratified with something which may please their fancies."—*Bloomfield*.

4. *Shall be turned unto fables.* See notes on 1 Tim i. 4; iv. 7.

5. *Watch thou in all things.* Be watchful against the evils before enu-

merated, and let no opportunity to do good escape your notice, ver. 2.

¶ *Endure afflictions.*—See note on ch. ii. 3, where the same word is translated "endure hardness." ¶ *Do the work of an evangelist.* "That is, preach Christ crucified for the sins of the whole world; for this, and this alone, is doing the work of an evangelist, or preacher of the glad tidings of peace and salvation by Christ. An angel from God was first sent to do the work of an evangelist; and how did he do it? 'Behold,' said he, *εὐαγγελίζομαι*, 'I evangelize unto you great joy, which shall be to all people; to you is born a Saviour.' Those who do not proclaim Christ as having tasted death for every man, and who do not implicitly show that every human soul may be saved, do not perform the work of evangelists; they, God help them! limit the Holy One of Israel. Yet so far as they preach the truth in sincerity, so far God acknowledges and blesses them and their labors; they do a part of the work, but not the whole."—*Clarke*. ¶ *Make full proof of thy ministry.* "The meaning here seems to be, to furnish full evidence of what is the design of the Christian ministry, and of what it is adapted to accomplish, by the faithful performance of all its duties. Timothy was so to discharge the duties of his office as to furnish a fair illustration of what the ministry could do, and thus to show the wisdom of the Saviour in its institution. This should be the aim of all the ministers of the gospel. Each one should resolve, by the blessing of God, that the ministry, in his hands, shall be allowed, by a fair trial, to show to the utmost what it is adapted to do for the welfare of mankind."—*Barnes*.

6. *For I am now ready to be offered.* I am about to die. "The word in the

offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought a good fight,

original, *σπένδομαι*, signifieth properly libation, or a drink offering; and he alludeth to the pouring out of blood or wine which was used in sacrifice, and seemeth withal, to intimate the manner of death wherewith he was to glorify God, which was not by being offered as a holocaust by fire, as Polycarp and many others were, but by a death wherein his blood was shed or poured out, namely, beheading."—*Assemb. Annot.* "The word *ready*, in the phrase 'ready to be offered,' conveys an idea which is not in the original. It implies a *willingness* to depart, which, whether true or not, is not the idea conveyed by the apostle. His statement is merely of the fact that he was about to die, or that his work was drawing to a close. No doubt he was *ready*, in the sense of being willing and prepared, but this is not the idea in the Greek. He was in the condition of the victim on whose head the wine and oil had been already poured, and which was just about to be put to death; that is, he was about to die. Every preparation had been made, and he only awaited the blow which was to strike him down."—*Barnes.* ¶ *The time of my departure is at hand.* "The time of my dissolution approaches."—*Haweis.* The ties which bound him to the world, or his soul to the body, as a ship to its moorings, were to be loosened, and his spirit to depart freely to its heavenly home.

7. *I have fought a good fight.* The imagery in this verse and the next is drawn from the Grecian games, to which Paul frequently alludes in his epistles. See 1 Cor. ix. 24-27, where similar ideas are expressed in similar language. "It is impossible to translate *ἀγῶνα ἡγωνίσμαι* fully in English. It is not strictly correct to render it, 'I have fought the fight,' and seems to introduce a new metaphor; *ἀγῶν* means a contest for a prize, and the metaphor is taken from the Greek foot-races. 'I have run the good

I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up

race' would be, perhaps, more exact. The literal English is, 'I have completed the glorious contest.'"—*Conybeare.* The same conflict, which was now successfully completed, is referred to in 1 Cor. ix. 24-26. ¶ *I have finished my course.* I have run over the whole course marked out for the race. The word *δρόμος* used only here and in Acts xiii. 25; xx. 24 (and in each case by Paul), means "a running, a race, course," and figuratively, "course, career of one's life and ministry."—*Robinson.* ¶ *I have kept the faith.* I have not been disloyal to the truth; neither hope of applause, nor fear of persecution, has induced me to turn aside, to the right hand or to the left, from the truth of the gospel committed to me; nor have I ever "shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts xx. 27. "Many eminent commentators render 'I have preserved my fidelity.' But the common interpretation, 'I have kept the precepts of the Christian faith,' besides being more apt, is much more agreeable to the *usus lingue.*"—*Bloomfield.*

8. *Henceforth there is laid up for me.* "At the end of my race, as there was a crown in reserve for those who had successfully striven in the Grecian games. The word *henceforth*—*λοιπόν*—means *what remains*, or *as to the rest*; and the idea is, that that was what remained of the whole career. The race had been run; the conflict had been waged; and all which was necessary to complete the whole transaction, was merely that the crown be bestowed."—*Barnes.* ¶ *A crown of righteousness.* It is a very common opinion that this crown of righteousness is equivalent to eternal life and perfect holiness and happiness after the resurrection; and that Paul expected to receive this unspeakable blessing as a reward for his faithfulness. Thus we read:—"This I can claim as my due; but the crown I expect is not one of fading leaves, but



for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the right-

eous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only,

a crown of righteousness, the reward which God, in his kindness, has promised to them who are faithful to the grace he has bestowed upon them."—

*Clarke*. "All fears of death vanish when I think of the glorious reward which awaits me. Henceforth there is laid aside for me a crown, not of olive leaves, but of righteousness, which, with all its honors and privileges, the Lord Jesus, the righteous judge, will deliver to me at the last day; and not to me only, but to all them also who, like me, conscious that they have served him faithfully, long for his appearing to judge the world."

—*Macknight*. That Paul expected to be raised from the dead is evident from his own language: "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. xv. 22; and that he expected to be crowned with holiness and happiness in the future life, is also evident from his description of the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 42-49. But that he did not expect to receive eternal life, and holiness, and happiness, as a "glorious reward," which he could "claim as his due," because he had been "faithful to the grace bestowed on him," and had "served the Lord faithfully," or, which is the same thing more briefly expressed, that he did not expect to receive salvation as the reward of works, is equally evident from his uniform and often repeated declaration, that salvation is the gracious "gift of God;" that it is "not of works, lest any man should boast." Rom. iv. 4, 5; v. 21; vi. 23; Eph. ii. 8, 9. He well knew, and declared, that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;" but that we can only be "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 20, 24. "Men are saved either because they have wholly obeyed the divine law, or on the ground of grace morely; that is, they are saved either because they are able to advance claims which meet the demands of the law, or else it must be

on the ground of pure gratuity; now, as all men have sinned, it is not the *first*; of course it must be the *second*."—*Stuart* on Rom. xi. 6. What, then, was this "crown of righteousness," which Paul says remained to be bestowed upon him in that day? The metaphor, continued from ver. 7, is taken from the Grecian games. "Having compared his labors as an apostle, to the exertions of the combatants in the games, he represents his reward under the idea of a crown; because that was the reward bestowed on the victors in these combats."—*Macknight*. See notes on 1 Cor. ix. 18, 25, where the same metaphor is used to express a "reward" to which the apostle considered himself entitled. In that case, the consciousness that he had exhibited incontrovertible evidence of his sincerity, which neither himself nor others could doubt, by preaching the gospel to the Corinthians "without charge," is represented as a "reward," and an "incorruptible crown." Here the crown is called "a crown of righteousness," and we may well suppose it to have been of a similar character. The apostle was conscious that, according to his ability, he had faithfully executed the trust committed to him when he was commissioned to preach the gospel to the Gentiles: "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts xxvi. 17, 18. In the performance of this work, he had been persecuted by the Gentiles, and even more violently by the Jews. 2 Cor. iv. 8-10; xi. 23-27. None of these persecutions, however, turned him aside from his duty. See Acts xx. 22-24. He had steadily pursued his course to the end, which was now near at hand. He had fought manfully in defence of the gospel, and had been loyal to

but unto all them also that love his appearing.

the truth. His conscience bore him witness that he had never "shunned to declare all the counsel of God." Acts xx. 27. This consciousness of fidelity in the performance of his duty must have been a source of happiness. He valued it more highly than life itself. "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Acts xx. 24. As he had now "finished his course," he was "ready to be offered," to lay down his life, to accept a martyr's crown. The great object of his life was accomplished; and in addition to the approbation of his own conscience, he felt assured of the approbation of all Christian hearts to the end of time. There was yet another jewel in the apostle's crown. When Peter inquired what reward he and his fellow-apostles should receive for forsaking all and following Jesus, he was assured, that when the kingdom of Christ should be visibly established on the earth, they should be recognized as worthy of all honor and obedience; that their words should be acknowledged as authoritative in the church, in future ages. "When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye, also, shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." See note on Matt. xix. 28. What the Twelve were to the Jews, Paul was to the Gentiles. If they judged the twelve tribes by proclaiming to them the gospel as the rule and guide of life, by whose principles their actions should be approved or condemned, in like manner was Paul enthroned as a judge of the Gentiles, to whom he was specially commissioned as an apostle, and whose rights and privileges as joint-inheritors of the divine blessing he vindicated against all aggressors. If the honor of such headship or leadership might properly be held up before the Twelve, as a fitting reward of their fidelity and their apostolic

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

labors, it could not have been improper for Paul to account his primacy among the Gentiles as one of the gems in his crown of rejoicing. ¶ *In that day.* The time indicated by the Lord's "appearing and his kingdom" was then near at hand. See note on ver. 1; and reference is had to the same "appearing," at the close of this verse. Yet "that day" is generally, and perhaps properly, understood to mean the day of Paul's death, of which he speaks in ver. 6, "the time of my departure is at hand." His crown was then secured to him beyond the possibility of doubt. When he had sealed his fidelity by martyrdom, there was no longer any possibility that he should forfeit his reward by turning aside from the truth through hope or fear. ¶ *And not to me only.* He did not claim to monopolize all the service nor all the reward. He acknowledged that others had labored in the same cause, with various success, and that each should receive an appropriate crown. ¶ *But unto all them also that love his appearing.* "And the same will be adjudged to all others, who shall have so spent their time, and continued in a Christian course, as that Christ's coming to reward the faithful, and to destroy all opposers and unfaithful, may be matter of desire and not terror to them, who, if they live not to enjoy his deliverances here, will be abundantly recompensed by death." — *Hammond.* When the Lord should appear, to distinguish between his friends and his foes, by visible tokens of judgment (see note on ver. 1), he would surely reward all who had endured to the end. Each should receive his crown; and if all were not fully equal to Paul's in brilliancy, they should be fit emblems of the worth and desert of their respective wearers.

9. *Do thy diligence, &c.* "Do thy utmost to come to me speedily." — *Conybeare.* It appears from what follows that Paul was left almost entirely alone in prison; and it may well be supposed that he earnestly desired to have at

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with

thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the

least one affectionate friend with him during the few days which would elapse before his martyrdom. And who so entirely fitted for this purpose as his "son" Timothy?

10. *For Demas hath forsaken me.* Demas is mentioned as one of the faithful, Col. iv. 14, and Philem. 24, and not elsewhere. All we know of him is what may be gathered from these three places. ¶ *Having loved this present world.* The word here translated *world* is αἰῶνα, not κόσμον, as in 1 John ii. 15. Demas need not be regarded as an avaricious man, who forsook Paul through hope of pecuniary advantage; but he seems to have had a strong love of life, and to have feared that he should lose it by remaining at Rome. ¶ *And is departed unto Thessalonica.* He is supposed by Calmet to have been a Thessalonian by birth. ¶ *Crescens to Galatia.* We know no more of this disciple. It is not even clear whether he left Paul through cowardice, like Demas, or whether, like Titus, he went, with the apostle's permission, to preach the gospel. ¶ *Titus unto Dalmatia.* "Paul does not mention the reason why Titus had gone there; but it is not improbable that he had gone to preach the gospel, or to visit the churches which Paul had planted in that region." — *Barnes*. It would be utterly inconsistent with the general character of Titus, that he should depart from Paul for any unworthy reason.

11. *Only Luke is with me.* "Luke alone is now with me; that is, alone of his companions and earlier associates, such as Mark next mentioned (see Col. iv. 10); though there were not wanting brethren, and in some degree fellow-laborers in the gospel, who dutifully attended on the apostle, as Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Take Mark,*

*and bring him with thee.* Mark is supposed to be the same disciple who is mentioned in Acts xii. 25; xv. 37-39; Col. iv. 10. He had formerly been disapproved by Paul, but seems to have regained his approbation. See note on Acts xiii. 13. ¶ *For he is profitable to me, &c.* This is a sufficiently distinct assurance of Paul's full confidence in Mark.

12. *And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.* Tychicus is mentioned, Acts xx. 4; Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7; Tit. iii. 12; always with respect, and twice as "a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord." Some suppose he had been previously sent to Ephesus, and that Paul preferred to send for Timothy rather than to recall him from his appointed work; others that he was sent at this time, and that he was the bearer of this epistle. In either case the apostle's special anxiety to see his "own son in the faith," 1 Tim. i. 2, is manifest, either to instruct him more fully or to be comforted by him.

13. *The cloak which I left at Troas, &c.* See note on Acts xvi. 8. The word translated *cloak* occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Some interpreters think it is rightly translated, and that Paul, having left his cloak at Troas, when on a journey in the summer, desired it now, on the approach of winter, and sent for it, as he had no means to procure another. Others suppose the word properly means a bag, or a case, in which books and parchments might be kept. "Φαίλονης means either a travelling-case (for carrying clothes, books, &c.) or a travelling-cloak. The former seems the more probable meaning here, from the mention of the books." — *Conybeare*. ¶ *With Carpus.* We know no more of this person; but we may reasonably suppose him to have been a friend whom Paul had previously visited.

books, *but* especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the copper-smith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

¶ *And the books.* No intimation is given what books are referred to, whether the Jewish Scriptures, as some suppose, or aught else. ¶ *But especially the parchments.* "Dressed skins were among the earliest materials for writing, and were in common use before the art of making paper from rags was discovered. These 'parchments' seem to have been something different from 'books,' and probably refer to some of his own writings. They may have contained notes, memorandums, journals, or unfinished letters. It is, of course, impossible now to determine what they were. Benson supposes they were letters which he had received from the churches; Macknight, that they were the originals of the letters which he had written; Bishop Bull, that they were a kind of commonplace book, in which he inserted hints, and extracts of the most remarkable passages in the authors which he read. All this, however, is mere conjecture." — *Barnes.*

14. *Alexander the coppersmith.* "Or, the brazier, as many critics say. This seems to be the person mentioned in the history of the riot at Ephesus, Acts xix. 33, and whom the enraged multitude would not hear when they knew he was a Jew. Probably he was one of the Judaizing teachers who violently opposed the true doctrine of the gospel, and was by that time become the apostle's enemy. The unbelieving Jews of Ephesus, knowing this, pushed him forward into the theatre to harangue the people, in expectation that he would vindicate them from having any connection with the Christian teachers." — *Macknight.* If, as is generally supposed, the same individual is designated in 1 Tim. i. 20, it would seem that his enmity to the gospel, and to Paul as its most prominent advocate, had increased rather than abated, for the apostle adopted the

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: *I pray God that*

extreme remedy of *delivering him unto Satan*, that he might "learn not to blaspheme." ¶ *Did me much evil.* In what manner he harmed the apostle does not appear, except that he withstood or opposed his words. Ver. 15. ¶ *The Lord reward him according to his works.* "I agree with the ancient and several modern commentators, that this is to be considered as not, properly speaking, an *imprecation*, but rather the expression of a hearty *wish* that the person in question may suffer condign punishment; that is, that the righteous God and Judge may treat him as he deserves, unless he should heartily repent of his sin." — *Bloomfield.*

15. *Of whom be thou ware also.* Hence it would seem that Alexander continued to reside in Ephesus, where Timothy was exposed to "harm" such as Paul had before suffered. His evil influence was to be carefully avoided. ¶ *For he hath greatly withstood our words.* Or, *our preachings*, as in the margin. The Judaizing teachers went far beyond the heathen philosophers in the bitterness and persistency of their opposition to Paul, as is plainly related in the Acts of the Apostles. Alexander is supposed to have been one of this class. He opposed Paul when he first preached at Ephesus, and his opposition continued up to the close of the apostle's life. He hindered the advancement of the gospel, as preached by Paul, by mingling Judaism with it, and insisting that Christians "must be circumcised, and keep the law," else they could "not be saved." Acts xv. 1, 24.

16. *At my first answer.* "One hearing, it seems, had been granted him at Rome; and he was in expectation of a second, during which interval, it is plain, this epistle was written; and as we learn from ecclesiastical history, this second turned out very differently

it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

from the first, since the Imperial butcher, in a rage, as Chrysostom tells us, at his conversion of the royal cup-bearer, had him beheaded." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *No man stood with me, but all men forsook me*. At first sight, it seems strange that of all the Christians at Rome, none had the courage to stand with Paul at his trial, and to give him their countenance and assistance. But his Master and ours was thus deserted by all his disciples, in the hour of extremity. "All the disciples forsook him, and fled," Matt. xxvi. 56. The fear of being involved in the same danger and loss of life overcame their sentiments of friendship, and they deserted him in his utmost need. ¶ *I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge*. Paul gives vent to his benevolent, forgiving emotions, in almost the precise language used many years previously by the martyr Stephen, when the murderers "laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." See Acts vii. 58-60.

17. *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me*. Like our Lord, when his disciples were "scattered, every man to his own," Paul was "not alone, because the Father was with him." John xvi. 32; and he experienced the divine aid which was promised to the faithful followers of Christ. Matt. x. 19; xxviii. 20. ¶ *That by me the preaching might be fully known, &c.* "In this passage, the apostle told Timothy, that, contrary to the expectation of his enemies, he had declared, in the hearing of Nero or his prefect, the supreme dominion of Christ, his right to all the Gentiles as his subjects, his power in their salvation, together with the method of that salvation. The apostle

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus abode at Corinth:

justly supposed that what was said and done at the Emperor's tribunal in Rome, where there was such a confluence of strangers from all quarters, would quickly fly abroad on the wings of fame, and be heard by all the Gentile converts everywhere." — *MacKnight*. ¶ *I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion*. I escaped death, at that time. Some suppose that, under the figure of a lion, Paul referred to Nero or his prefect, some that he intended to represent imminent danger of death, and others that he speaks of an escape from being actually thrown to wild beasts. But I apprehend the general idea is simply that he escaped death.

18. *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work*. "He does not say from death, for he expected now to die, see ver. 6. But he was assured that God would keep him from shrinking from death when the hour approached, from apostasy, and from the manifestation of an improper spirit when he came to die." — *Barnes*. ¶ *And will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom*. He had no doubt of a resurrection to immortal holiness and happiness. ¶ *To whom be glory forever and ever*. See note on Rom. xi. 36.

19. *Salute Prisca and Aquila*. Priscilla and Aquila entertained Paul at Corinth, Acts xviii. 1-3, and were at Rome, when he wrote his epistle to the Romans. Rom. xvi. 3. They seem afterwards to have visited Ephesus. ¶ *And the household of Onesiphorus*. See note on ch. i. 16.

20. *Erastus abode at Corinth*. See note on Rom. xvi. 23. No fault is attributed to him. His official duties at Corinth were important. ¶ *But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick*.

but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

Trophimus had been a travelling companion of Paul on several occasions. See Acts xx. 4; xxi. 29. He probably commenced the journey to Rome with the apostle, but, becoming sick, was left at Miletum, the former capital of Ionia. See note on Acts xx. 15.

21. *Do thy diligence, &c.* See note on ver. 9. ¶ *Eubulus.* This person and the others named in this verse, seem to have remained faithful to

22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

¶ The second epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

Paul in the midst of persecution. See note on ver. 11. We know no more of them.

22. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit, &c.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20.

The subscription to this epistle has no canonical authority, nor is there any evidence that it was written by Paul, or any other inspired penman.

# 

## 

### 

#### 

##### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

###### 

######

2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;

4 To Titus, *mine own son*

to secure the acknowledgment, or recognition of the truth." — *Barnes*. It is not enough that we believe the truth, or exercise faith in the gospel; we are under obligations also to confess the truth, or to proclaim the gospel, for the benefit of others. Such was the duty of the early Christians; such, also, is ours. See notes on Rom. x. 9. 10. ¶ *Which is after godliness*. "Which leads to godliness." — *Haweis*. The truth, revealed in the gospel, tends to purity and godliness. See ch. ii. 11, 12.

2. *In hope of eternal life*. The hope of eternal life is inspired and encouraged by that gospel, which also purifies the heart through faith. ¶ *Which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began*. "Alluding to the promise made by God to Adam and Eve, and their posterity, at the fall (that 'the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head'), and afterwards renewed in the covenant with Abraham." — *Bloomfield*. In this interpretation, *χρόνον αἰωνίων*, *before the world began*, is understood in its proper sense, namely, *ancient ages*. ¶ *Before the world began*. "That is, the purpose was then formed, and the promise may be considered as in fact then made; for a purpose in the mind of God, though it is not as yet made known, is equivalent to a promise." — *Barnes*. There is truth in both these interpretations. And the promise is certain of fulfilment; for "God cannot lie." See notes on Rom. iii. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 17.

3. *But hath in due times manifested*, &c. What was previously certain in his own purpose, namely, the gift of eternal life to mankind, God "manifested," or made known, in the gospel which Paul was commissioned to preach

after the common faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6 If any be blameless, the

to the Gentiles. See notes on 2 Tim. i. 9, 10.

4. *To Titus, mine own son, &c.* See note on 1 Tim. i. 2. ¶ *Grace, mercy, and peace, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

5. *Crete*. See notes on Acts ii. 9, 11. Notwithstanding the very bad character attributed to the Cretans in ver. 12, it is observable "that after the gospel was planted in Crete, by the apostle and his assistant Titus, it took such deep root there, and spread itself so widely through the island, that it has subsisted there ever since, and is at present the religion of the natives, who are in general of the Greek church." — *Macknight*. ¶ *That thou shouldest set in order, &c.* For some reason, Paul found it necessary to leave Crete before he had fully completed the work of organizing the new church. Further instructions were necessary, proper officers to be selected and installed, suitable barriers to be erected against sinful propensities on the one hand, and the influence of false teachers on the other. ¶ *And ordain elders in every city*. That is, in every city where the gospel had been embraced by any considerable number. *Ordain* is here to be understood, not in the technical sense in which the word is now generally used, but in the plain, ordinary sense of the original word, namely, "to set, to constitute, to appoint." — *Robinson*. The *elders*, called *bishops* in ver. 7, literally presbyters, were officers appointed in the church, by apostolic authority. See note on Acts xiv. 23.

6. *If any be blameless*. See note on 1 Tim. iii. 2. ¶ *Faithful children, &c.* See notes on 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.



husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a

lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers,

7. *For a bishop must be blameless.* Manifestly the same officer is indicated who is styled *elder* in ver. 5. ¶ *Steward of God.* See notes on 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. ¶ *Not self-willed.* "The word *αὐθαδής* does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It means, properly, self-complacent; and then, assuming, arrogant, imperious. — *Rob. Lex.* The gist of the offence, the very 'head and front,' is that of being *self-complacent*; a trait of character which, of necessity, makes a man imperious, dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, and unyielding. Such a man evidently is not fit for the office of a minister of the gospel." — *Barnes.* ¶ *Not soon angry.* See note on 1 Tim. iii. 2. ¶ *Not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre.* See note on 1 Tim. iii. 3.

8. *But a lover of hospitality.* See note on 1 Tim. iii. 2. ¶ *A lover of good men.* Or, *good things*, as in the margin. ¶ *Sober.* See note on 1 Tim. iii. 2. ¶ *Just, holy.* "Here, there appears to be a climax; the former term denoting the being right as to human laws and duties, the latter, as to God and his laws, pure from sin, godly, pious." — *Bloomfield.* ¶ *Temperate.* Holding all the passions in due subordination, This term properly includes not only abstinence from intoxicating drinks, to which it is now almost exclusively applied, but also the proper control of all fleshly appetites and propensities.

9. *Holding fast the faithful word.* Steadfastly believing the gospel. See note on Eph. iv. 14. ¶ *As he hath been taught.* Or, *in teaching*, as in the margin. Either holding fast the gospel which he has learned from the accredited messengers of God, or being guided by that gospel in teaching others. The idea is substantially the

same in either interpretation. ¶ *That he may be able by sound doctrine, &c.* The professed minister, who has no well-grounded faith in the gospel, is but poorly qualified to encourage believers, or to convince unbelievers. Indeed, such a one can scarcely be supposed even to desire to do either. They who were "set for the defence of the gospel," Phil. i. 17, against the Judaizers on the one hand, and the heathen philosophers on the other, had need of a living faith in the gospel. Every true minister needs such faith now.

10. *For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers.* There are many who lead honest inquirers astray. Professing to be Christians, they deceive the unwary by substituting vain philosophy, or other hurtful errors, for the gospel. ¶ *Specially they of the circumcision.* Namely, the Judaizing teachers. These were the arch-enemies of Paul, through his whole ministry. Wherever he planted the gospel among the Gentiles, the converts were perpetually assailed by those who said, "Ye must be circumcised and keep the law." Acts xv. 24. Thus were they "troubled with words" to the "subverting" of their souls. It is supposed that the gospel was first planted in Crete by Jewish residents of that island, who, on one of their periodical visits at Jerusalem, heard the apostles preach on the day of Pentecost, and were converted. Like other Jews, they were unwilling to believe that the law was superseded by the gospel, and therefore zealously opposed the doctrine of Paul that Gentile Christians were free from the yoke of the law. Against this class the apostle especially warns Titus, exhorting him in the appointment of elders, ver.

specially they of the circumcision :

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

12 One of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own, said, The

Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith ;

14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

5, to have particular regard to their soundness in the faith, and their ability to counteract the opposition of such gainsayers, ver. 9.

11. *Whose mouths must be stopped.* "It is, of course, implied here that this was to be done in a proper way, and in accordance with the spirit of the gospel. The apostle gives Titus no civil power to do it, nor does he direct him to call in the aid of the civil arm. All the agency which he specifies as proper for this is that of argument and exhortation. These are the proper means of silencing the advocates of error; and the history of the church shows that the ministers of religion can be safely intrusted with no other. Comp. Ps. xxxii. 8, 9."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Who subvert whole houses.* Subvert the faith of whole families. ¶ *For filthy lucre's sake.* See note on 1 Tim. iii. 3. "The things which the false teachers, contrary to their conscience, inculcated for the sake of drawing money from the Jewish converts, were, the necessity of obeying the law of Moses, in order to salvation; the efficacy of the Levitical atonements to procure pardon for those who continued in their sins; and the merit of being descended from Abraham, whereby all his children, without exception, were thought entitled to eternal life."—*Macknight*. Probably the Gentile teachers also led the converts astray "through philosophy and vain deceit," Col. ii. 8, or subverted their souls by "oppositions of science falsely so called," 1 Tim. vi. 20; but ver. 14 indicates that the reference is especially to the Judaizing teachers.

12. *One of themselves, &c.* "Some will have this allegation to be taken out of Callimachus' hymn in praise of

Jupiter, where the first part of this verse is found; but Callimachus was no prophet of the Cretians; the apostle therefore certainly meaneth Epimenides, who himself was a Cretian, whose poem is called a book of oracles or prophecies, among which this whole verse is found; namely, the Cretians are always *liars*, that is, crafty companions, false in their words; *evil beasts*, that is, fierce, intractable, and dangerous to deal withal; and *slow bellies*, that is, given to sloth and idleness, and luxurious gluttons; which censure of the Cretian the apostle here confirms, not to discredit those islanders or blast their reputation, but to discover the maladies of that people to him whom he left there as a physician, to cure them by sound and wholesome doctrine."—*Assemb. Annot.* It would seem that the Jewish and Gentile inhabitants of Crete, the Judaizing teachers and heathen philosophers, were all included in the description.

13. *This witness is true.* What was said by the poet, or *prophet*, many years before, remained true when this epistle was written. The general character of the people continued to be bad. Even the conversion of some to Christianity had not yet removed the public reproach. ¶ *Wherefore rebuke them sharply.* Pointedly, so that they shall feel it. ¶ *That they may be sound in the faith.* See note on ver. 9. That they may believe the gospel in its purity, unadulterated by Jewish fables and the traditions of men, ver. 14.

14. *Jewish fables.* See note on 1 Tim. i. 4. ¶ *Commandments of men, &c.* See note on Matt. xv. 3-5.

15. *Unto the pure all things are pure,*

15 Unto the pure all things are pure : but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure ; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16 They profess that they know God ; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

&c. "It would seem from this, that the heretics attacked taught their followers to abstain from certain acts, or certain kinds of food, as being impure. We must not, however, conclude from hence that they were *Ascetics*. Superstitious abstinence from certain material acts is quite compatible with gross impurity of teaching and of practice, as we see in the case of the Hindoo devotees, and in those impure votaries of Cybele and of Isis, mentioned so often in Juvenal and other writers of the same date. The early Gnostics, here attacked, belonged apparently to that class who borrowed their theosophy from Jewish sources, and the precepts of abstinence which they imposed may probably have been derived from the Mosaic law. Their immorality is plainly indicated by the following words."—*Conybeare*. See notes on Rom. xiv. 14, 20, where the distinction between pure and impure, as modified by the state of the mind, is expressed in slightly different language.

16. *They profess that they know God, &c.* "This seems intended to evince the justice of the foregoing charge, ver. 15, of unbelief, and anticipate an objection exculpatory of the false teachers, that they have much knowledge of God and religion, are pious and laborious in their preaching, and pure in their lives. The antecedent, however, the apostle denies, hence the consequent falls to the ground. They profess, indeed, to know, love, and serve God, but in their actions they neither know nor obey him, their deeds not corresponding to their professions."—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *Reprobate*. Or, "void of judgment," as in the margin. "Literally, unable to stand the test;

## CHAPTER II.

**B**UT speak thou the things which become sound doctrine :

2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

3 The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as be-

that is, when tested by the call of duty, they fail."—*Conybeare*. See notes on Rom. i. 28 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine*. See note on ch. i. 9. In the following verses, many of "the things which become sound doctrine" are specified.

2. *That the aged men be sober*. See note on 1 Tim. iii. 2, where the same word is translated *vigilant*. ¶ *Grave*. See note on 1 Tim. iii. 4. ¶ *Temperate*. Prudent, sober-minded. See note on 1 Tim. iii. 2, where the same word is translated *sober*. ¶ *Sound in faith*. See note on ch. i. 13. ¶ *In charity*. Of a loving spirit. See notes on 1 Cor. ch. xiii. ¶ *In patience*. See note on Rom. v. 3.

3. *The aged women likewise*. The same exhortation is here made general, which was addressed to a particular class of "aged women" in 1 Tim. iii. 11 ; v. 2-10. ¶ *As becometh holiness*. According to the pure spirit of the gospel. ¶ *Not false accusers*. Literally, *not devils*, διαβόλους. See notes on Matt. iv. 1 ; 2 Tim. iii. 3. ¶ *Not given to much wine*. See note on 2 Tim. iii. 3. ¶ *Teachers of good things*. See notes on 1 Tim. v. 2-6.

4. *That they may teach the young women to be sober*. "Margin, *wise*, a word similar to that which in ver. 2 is rendered *temperate*, and in 1 Tim. iii. 2, *sober*. The meaning is, that they should instruct them to have their desires and passions well regulated, or under proper control."—*Barnes*. ¶ *To love their husbands*. Elsewhere, the apostle exhorts husbands to love their wives, and wives to reverence their

cometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that

husbands. See notes on Eph. v. 22-33. The duty of mutual love between husbands and wives is reciprocal. With such love, the marriage relation is a blessing; without it, a curse. ¶ *To love their children.* One might suppose the mother had no need to be taught to love her children. Yet even this depth of sinful degradation may be conceived, yea, has been reached. See note on Rom. i. 31. The spirit of the gospel, shed abroad in the heart, revives the "natural affection," and restores the maternal love.

5. *To be discreet.* The same word is translated *temperate*, in ver. 2. See note on ver. 4, where a similar word is translated *sober*. ¶ *Chaste.* Pure in thought, word, and deed. The same word is translated *pure*, in Phil. iv. 8; 1 Tim. v. 22; Jas. iii. 17; 1 John iii. 3. ¶ *Keepers at home.* "Careful of their families. The word *οικοφρονες* signifies both those who keep at home, and those who take proper care of their families. In this latter sense I understand it here, with Elsner and the Vulgate."—*Macknight*. ¶ *Good.* "In all respects, and in all relations. To a wife, a mother, a sister, there can be no higher characteristic ascribed than to say that she is good."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Obedient to their own husbands.* See notes on 1 Cor. xi. 3-9. ¶ *That the word of God be not blasphemed.* Or, irreverently spoken of, as if it countenanced disorderly and sinful practices.

6. *Sober-minded.* See note on ver. 5, where a similar word is translated *discreet*. "In like manner, also, exhort the young men, the hope of rising families, upon whom so much of the credit and support of the gospel will

the word of God be not blasphemed.

6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is

depend, that they accustom themselves betimes to be sober and steady in their behavior, superior to sensual temptations, and constant in the exercise of every part of self-government."—*Doddridge*.

7. *In all things show thyself a pattern of good works.* Not only teaching the way of wisdom, but walking in it; exhibiting an example of conformity to the divine law; leading the way to heaven, as well as pointing the path. ¶ *In doctrine showing uncorruptness.* Purity in doctrine. The truth, without admixture of error. The gospel, unadulterated by Jewish traditions or by Gentile philosophy. ¶ *Gravity.* The word used here occurs in 1 Tim. ii. 2 (*honesty*), and iii. 4. It indicates "venerableness, sanctity, and in the New Testament, gravity, dignity, probity."—*Robinson*. ¶ *Sincerity.* The word *ἀσθαπρία* is translated *immortality*, in Rom. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 10; *incorruption*, in 1 Cor. xv. 42, 50, 53, 54; and *sincerity*, here and in Eph. vi. 24. It indicates "exemption from decay," and "figuratively, incorruptness, sincerity."—*Robinson*. It is omitted by some critics. "The end sought is, that the learners may, through his instructions, be penetrated with the personal sincerity, which is concerned only about the communication of the pure truth (Heydenreich), and the deep seriousness of the teacher. Thus does he who teaches show himself a pattern in his teaching; the truth and power of that which he makes known is perceived in his own person."—*Olshausen*.

8. *Sound speech that cannot be condemned.* Some commentators understand the apostle to mean pure doc-

of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

9 *Exhort* servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please *them* well in all things; not answering again;

10 Not purloining, but shew-

ing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly

trine, unadulterated truth; others suppose the *sound speech* indicates the manner in which the true doctrine of the gospel should be preached. The following interpretation combines both the others: "The doctrine to be preached must be pure and free from all corrupt mixtures; it must be entire, so as to want nothing necessary to be known; it must be such as is wholesome and beneficial to the hearer; it must be delivered with gravity, and with care, that there be nothing spoken which may be subject to reprehension." — *Whitby*.

9. *Exhort servants to be obedient, &c.* See notes on Eph. vi. 5-7.

10. *Not purloining.* Not stealing, or appropriating to themselves the property of their masters. ¶ *But showing all good fidelity.* Being faithful in all respects to the trust reposed in them; performing their whole duty to their masters, however remiss the masters might be in the performance of theirs. ¶ *That they may adorn, &c.* That they may exhibit the purifying influence of the gospel in the purity of their own lives. The "doctrine of God our Saviour," the gospel of his grace, is adorned, when its legitimate effects, as specified in ver. 12, are fully exemplified in the life and conversation of believers. See note on Matt. v. 16.

11. *For the grace of God.* Salvation from sin, revealed in the gospel, is uniformly ascribed to the *grace* of God, and is represented as a free gift, bestowed by his love. See notes on Rom. v. 15-18; vi. 3. ¶ *That bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.* "The proper construction is, 'the grace of God, bringing salvation to all men, hath appeared,' that is, hath manifested itself." — *Rosenmüller*. "For

the grace of God hath been made manifest, bringing salvation to all mankind. This statement seems intended to contradict the Gnostic notion that salvation was given to the enlightened alone." — *Conybeare*. "That is, in the margin, 'the grace which brings salvation to all men has been revealed.' The marginal reading is most in accordance with the Greek, though it will bear either construction. If that which is in the text be adopted, it means that the plan of salvation has been revealed to all classes of men; that is, that it is announced or revealed to all the race that they may be saved. If the other rendering be adopted, it seems that that plan was fitted to secure the salvation of all men; that none were excluded from the offer; that provision had been made for all, and all might come and be saved. Whichever interpretation be adopted, the sense here will not be essentially varied. It is that the gospel was adapted to *man as man*, and therefore might include servants as well as masters; subjects as well as kings; the poor as well as the rich; the ignorant as well as the learned." — *Barnes*. "The marginal reading is" not only "most in accordance with the Greek," but it is also most in accordance with the facts in the case. All men need salvation; none can purchase it, or claim it as his just due; all are equally dependent on divine grace for its bestowment as a free gift; and God, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, is impartial.

12. *Teaching us.* That is, the grace of God, or the gospel which contains a revelation of that grace, teaches us. ¶ *Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts.* "Literally, saying no to their solicitations; implying, as Theophylact re-

lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appear-

marks, 'total and heartfelt aversion.'" — *Bloomfield*. By *ungodliness* may be understood all impiety towards God, whether in thought, in word, or in deed, and by worldly lusts all improper desires, which might induce us to injure our fellow-men, and the improper indulgence of our animal appetites, to our own injury. ¶ *We should live soberly*. Temperately; restraining our passions and appetites within due bounds. ¶ *Righteously*. Justly; rendering to our fellow-men their just due; doing to others as we might lawfully desire them to do unto us. Matt. vii. 12. ¶ *Godly*. Religiously performing all our duties to God, obeying his commandments and trusting unreservedly in his grace. We have here an epitome of the whole duty of man; namely, to forsake whatever is impious towards God or injurious to ourselves or others, and to perform faithfully every duty which we owe to God, to our fellow-men, and to ourselves. All this is taught by that divine grace which communicates salvation; indeed, it may be regarded as salvation itself, so far as the present life is concerned. See note on ver. 14.

13. *Looking for that blessed hope*. "The fulfilment of that hope so full of blessedness to us." — *Barnes*. *Hope* is here put for the blessing which is the object of hope. The same *looking for* or expectation is more largely expressed in Rom. viii. 18–25. ¶ *And the glorious appearing*. The apostle may be understood to indicate that glorious manifestation of divine power, to which he several times refers as near at hand, when a visible distinction should be made between the friends and the enemies of the Lord, and which he always describes as an object of hope; see note on 2 Thess. i. 7; or we may suppose him to mean that other and later coming, also an object of hope, of which he speaks in 1 Thess. iv. 16. The latter interpretation is favored by

ing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto him-

the great majority of commentators. ¶ *Of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. By this phrase, some understand the apostle to teach that the supreme God and his Son Jesus Christ would *appear together* in glory; others insist that such a visible appearance is never predicated of the Father, and that the reference is solely to Christ, who is styled "the great God and Saviour." I apprehend the truth lies between these two extremes. Jesus is declared to be "the brightness of" God's "glory, and the express image of his person." Heb. i. 3. Any glorious manifestation of himself may therefore be regarded as a display of the divine glory. In accordance with this idea, the apostle, describing the final coming of Christ, says, "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. iv. 16. In like manner, our Lord himself, describing his coming for the establishment of his kingdom on the earth, says, "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels." Matt. xvi. 27. In either case, the Father's glory is manifested through the "appearing" of the Son; and such I suppose to be the idea expressed in this place.

14. *Who gave himself for us*. "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. ii. 6; who was "crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. ¶ *That he might redeem us from all iniquity*. This was the special work committed to him. He was sent into the world to "save his people from their sins, and to bless them in turning away every one from his iniquities." Matt. i. 21; Acts iii. 26. This is equivalent to causing them to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts." Ver. 12. ¶ *And purify unto himself, &c.* Equivalent to causing men to live

self a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

## CHAPTER III.

**P**UT them in mind to be subject to principalities and

soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," ver. 12. This blessed result may be confidently expected in due time, because it is secured by that God whose love and wisdom and power are infinite, "according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." Eph. i. 9.

15. *These things speak, &c.* "The sense here is, he was to do it decidedly, without ambiguity, without compromise, and without keeping anything back. He was to state these things, not as being advice or counsel, but as the requirement of God." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Let no man despise thee.* Preserve such dignity of demeanor, and uprightness of conduct, and earnestness of address, as shall secure to you the respect of all men. See note on 1 Tim. iv. 12.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *Put them in mind to be subject, &c.* See note on Rom. xiii. 1. ¶ *Principalities and powers.* See note on Rom. viii. 38, where a different word is translated *powers*, but the same idea is involved. ¶ *To obey magistrates.* Christianity inculcates obedience to all the lawful commands of the powers that be, while at the same time it recognizes a higher law, whose authority is paramount. Compare notes on Acts iv. 19, 20; Rom. xiii. 1. ¶ *To be ready to every good work.* To be prompt in the performance of every Christian duty.

2. *To speak evil of no man.* Literally, blaspheme no man. The idea is, that we should not slander, or defame, or calumniate our fellow-men. ¶ *No*

powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready for every good work,

2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

3 For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another.

*brawlers.* Not quarrelsome or contentious. The same word occurs in 1 Tim. iii. 3. ¶ *But gentle.* See note on 1 Tim. iii. 3, where the same word is translated *patient*. ¶ *Showing all meekness unto all men.* See notes on Acts xx. 19; Rom. xii. 3.

3. *For we ourselves also were sometime, &c.* This is offered as "a reason for such lenity and mildness towards abusive heathen opponents; namely, pity for their miserable condition, and recollection that they themselves were once such as those persons now are. By the expression, *we ourselves*, the best expositors are agreed that the apostle identifies himself with them, as he often does elsewhere, in order to soften disagreeable topics and avoid offence; for, notwithstanding what some say, there is here scarcely any particular suitable to Paul when a Jew, whereas all of them are very similar to those by which the apostle describes the heathens at Rom. i. and elsewhere." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Foolish.* Destitute of true wisdom. It has been supposed that Paul may have alluded to the language of the Psalmist, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Ps. xiv. 1. ¶ *Disobedient.* That is to the wholesome authority of human or divine law. ¶ *Deceived.* Expecting happiness as the fruit of sin, instead of seeking it in the cultivation of virtue and piety. ¶ *Serving divers lusts and pleasures.* Obeying the impulses of fleshly appetites and propensities. See notes on Rom. i. 28–31; vi. 16, 17. ¶ *Living in malice and envy.* See note on Rom. i. 29. ¶ *Hateful and hating one another.* Incurring the ill-will of others by our

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regener-

evil deeds, and indulging the same unholy passion against them; thus violating the second great commandment personally, and causing others to violate it. Although the description in this verse may have been specially applicable to the condition of the heathen in the apostolic age, it applies also, with more or less particularity, to all men in an unconverted state, and furnishes a reason why Christians should be gentle and forbearing to the ungodly, remembering their own former shortcomings.

4. *But after that the kindness, &c.* "But when God, our Saviour, made manifest his kindness and love of men." — *Conybeare*. "The plan of salvation was founded on love to man, and was the highest expression of that love. The Greek of this verse is, 'when the kindness and love of God our Saviour was manifested, he saved us' (ver. 5), to wit, from those sins of which we had before been guilty." — *Barnes*.

5. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, &c.* See notes on Eph. ii. 8, 9. "Then out of his free, undeserved mercy towards us, not in respect of, nor by way of return unto, any good action of ours, he rescued and delivered us out of our sinful courses, put us into a state of salvation upon our giving ourselves up in baptism, his vowed reformed servants, sealing unto us the pardon of all our sins, and then bestowing his Spirit upon us, to bring forth in us all fruits of new life." — *Hammond*. ¶ *He saved us*. Special reference seems to be made to a deliverance already experienced from the ungodly condition described in ver. 3. See note on ch. ii. 12. Final and perfect salvation from sin is to be expected as the fruit of the same grace; not as a reward earned and justly claimed by man, but as a

ation, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs

gift freely bestowed by the gracious Father of our spirits, through his Son Jesus Christ, whom he sent "to be the Saviour of the world." Rom. v. 15-21; vi. 23; 1 John iv. 14. ¶ *By the washing of regeneration, &c.* "By the regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is like unto a bath of water, whereby the filth of our sins is washed away and cleansed, Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27, whereof the font of baptism is a sign and seal. See the like manner of speech, Rom. iv. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 21." — *Assemb. Annot.* The word *παλιγγενεσίας*, meaning "new birth, regeneration, reproduction," here indicates, "in a moral sense new birth, that is, regeneration, a change by grace from a carnal nature to a Christian life, from sinful to holy affections." It does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, except in Matt. xix. 28, where it is "spoken of the complete external manifestation of the Messiah's kingdom." — *Robinson*. "By the renewing of the Holy Ghost, we are to understand not only the profession of being bound to live a new life, but the grace that renews the heart and enables us thus to live; so the *renewing influences* are here intended. Baptism changes nothing; the grace signified by it cleanses and purifies. They who think baptism to be regeneration neither know the Scriptures nor the power of God; therefore, they do greatly err." — *Clarke*.

6. *Which he shed on us abundantly, &c.* There may be an allusion here to the extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. See note on Acts ii. 33. But more probably the apostle refers to the influence of the Spirit on all Christian hearts. See notes on Rom. v. 5; viii. 26, 27.

7. *That being justified by his grace.* See note on Rom. iii. 24. ¶ *We*



according to the hope of eternal life.

8 *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject;

*should be made heirs, &c.* See notes on Rom. viii. 15-17.

8. *Be careful to maintain good works.* See notes on ch. ii. 11-14. ¶ *These things are good and profitable unto men.* "That is, these doctrines which he had stated were not mere matters of speculation, but they were fitted to promote human happiness, and they should be constantly taught." — *Barnes*.

9. *But avoid foolish questions and genealogies.* See notes on 1 Tim. i. 4. ¶ *And contentions and strivings about the law.* Such as the Jews indulged, to the sacrifice of more important objects. See Matt. xv. 1-9. ¶ *For they are unprofitable and vain.* The subjects of such contentions and strivings were often unimportant, and their discussion did not promote spiritual happiness. These subjects are placed in vivid contrast to those mentioned in ver. 8.

10. *A man that is a heretic.* "We have seen that αἵρεσις is used by St. Paul, in his earlier writings, simply for a religious sect, sometimes (as Acts xxvi. 5) without disapprobation; sometimes (as 1 Cor. xi. 19) in a bad sense; here we find its derivative, αἵρετικός (which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament), already assuming a bad sense, akin to that which it afterwards bore. It should be also observed that these early heretics united moral depravity with erro-

11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

15 All that are with me sa-

neous teaching; their works bore witness against their doctrine." — *Conybeare*. ¶ *After a first and second admonition.* Act not hastily. Strive to restrain before you cut off. Comp. Matt. xviii. 15-17; Luke xiii. 6-9. ¶ *Reject.* See notes on 2 Cor. vi. 17; 2 Thess. iii. 6.

11. *Subverted.* Changed for the worse; no longer a fit associate for the faithful. ¶ *And sinneth, being condemned of himself.* "His own conscience condemns him. His own course, in attempting a division or schism in this church, shows him that it is right that he should be separated from the communion of Christians." — *Barnes*.

12. *Artemas.* This person is not named elsewhere in the New Testament. ¶ *Tychicus.* See note on Eph. vi. 21. ¶ *Nicopolis.* Supposed to be "the city of that name in Epirus." — *Conybeare*.

13. *Zenas the lawyer.* Zenas is not elsewhere named in the New Testament. ¶ *Apollos.* Supposed to be the same who is mentioned in Acts xviii. 24, and 1 Cor. iii. 4-6. ¶ *Diligently.* *Zealously.* Assist them earnestly.

14. *Maintain good works.* Or, "profess honest trades," as in the margin. The larger and more general sense is to be preferred, as this includes the other and goes beyond it. See notes on ch. ii. 11-14.

15. *All that are with me salute thee.*

lute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

See note on Rom. xvi. 3. ¶ *Greet them that love us in the faith.* That is, in the faith of the gospel. ¶ *Grace be with you all.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20.

¶ It was written to Titus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.

Although it is probable (ch. iii. 12) that this epistle was written at Nicopolis, still it must be said of this subscription, as of many others, that it has no canonical authority.

# EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

## CHAPTER I.

**P**AUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our*

The authorship of this epistle has uniformly been ascribed to St. Paul. Its object and the time when it was written have been stated as follows: "Onesimus, a slave, on some disgust, having run away from his master Philemon, came to Rome, and falling into want, as is supposed, he applied to the apostle, of whose imprisonment he had heard, and with whose benevolent disposition he was well acquainted, having, as it seems, formerly seen him in his master's house. Or the fame of the apostle's preaching and miracles having drawn Onesimus to hear some of the many discourses which he delivered in his own hired house in Rome, these made such an impression on him, that he became a sincere convert to the Christian faith; for the apostle calls him, ver. 10, 'his son, whom he had begotten in his bonds.' After his conversion, Onesimus abode with the apostle, and served him with the greatest assiduity and affection. But being sensible of his fault in running away from his master, he wished to repair that injury by returning to him. At the same time, being afraid that on his return his master would inflict on him the punishment which, by the law or custom of Phrygia, was due to a fugitive slave, and which, as Grotius says, he could inflict without applying to any magistrate, he besought the apostle to write to Philemon, requesting him to forgive, and to receive him again into his family. The apostle, always ready to do good offices, very

brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer,

2 And to *our* beloved Apphia,

willingly complied with Onesimus' desire, and wrote this letter to Philemon, in which, with the greatest softness of expression, warmth of affection, and delicacy of address, he not only interceded for Onesimus' pardon, but urged Philemon to esteem him, and put confidence in him, as a sincere Christian. And because restitution, by repairing the injury that had been done, restores the person who did the injury to the character which he had lost, the apostle, to enable Onesimus to appear in Philemon's family, with some degree of reputation, bound himself in this epistle, by his handwriting, not only to repay all that Onesimus owed to Philemon, but to make full reparation, also, for whatever injury he had done him by running away from him. That this epistle was written from Rome about the time the epistle to the Colossians was written, may be gathered from the following circumstances: like the epistle to the Colossians, this was written when the apostle was in bonds, ver. 1, 10, 13, 23, and when he had good hopes of obtaining his liberty, ver. 22. Timothy joined Paul in both epistles. Epaphroditus, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, joined in the salutations in both. Lastly, Onesimus, the bearer of this, was one of the messengers by whom the epistle to the Colossians was sent. Col. iv. 9."—*Macknight*. In the opinions expressed in the foregoing remarks, very many commentators substantially agree. It is thought by some, however, that the

and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house:

3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

terms "slave" and "master" are susceptible of some modification. See note on ver. 16.

1. *Paul a prisoner of Jesus Christ.* Paul is supposed to have written this epistle while he was imprisoned at Rome. ¶ *And Timothy our brother.* See note on 2 Cor. i. 1. ¶ *Unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer.* Little is known of Philemon except what may be gathered from this epistle. Most commentators agree in opinion that he was a member of the Colossian Church; but what rank he held in the church is wholly a matter of conjecture. "The word rendered fellow-laborer, *συνεργός*, does not determine what office he held, if he held any, or in what respects he was a fellow-laborer with Paul. It means a co-worker or helper, and doubtless here means that he was a helper or fellow-worker in the great cause to which Paul had devoted his life, but whether as a preacher, or deacon, or a private Christian, cannot be ascertained." — *Barnes*.

2. *And to our beloved Apphia.* Perhaps the wife of Philemon, or, as some think, his sister. She is not named elsewhere in the New Testament. ¶ *And Archippus our fellow-soldier.* See notes on Col. iv. 17. ¶ *And to the church in thy house.* See note on Rom. xvi. 5.

3. *Grace to you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

4. *I thank my God.* That is, for the good report which I have heard of you, ver. 5. ¶ *Making mention of thee always in my prayers.* See notes on Rom. i. 9; Eph. i. 15, 16.

5. *Hearing of thy love and faith, &c.* That is, faith in the Lord Jesus, and

love to all saints, or the disciples of Jesus. See note on Rom. i. 8. This was what excited the thankfulness of the apostle, ver. 4.

6. *That the communication of thy faith, &c.* This is the subject of the apostle's prayer, ver. 4. "The phrase translated 'communication of thy faith' means the making of thy faith common to others; that is, enabling others to partake of the fruits of it, to wit, by good deeds. Calvin has well expressed the sense of this passage. 'It is to be observed that the apostle here does not proceed in the commendation of Philemon, but rather expresses what he desires for him from the Lord. These words are connected with those in which he says that he remembered him in his prayers. What, therefore, did he desire for Philemon? That his faith, expressing itself by good fruits, might be shown to be true, and not vain. For he calls that the communication of his faith when it does not remain inoperative within, but bears itself forth to benefit men by its proper effects. For although faith has its proper seat in the heart, yet it communicates itself to men by good works.' The meaning is, that he desired that Philemon would so make common the proper fruits of faith by his good deeds towards others, that all might acknowledge it to be genuine and efficacious." — *Barnes*. ¶ *May become effectual, &c.* "May be more and more efficacious in extorting from all that behold it the due acknowledgment of every good and valuable thing which is in you all towards Christ Jesus, and all those whom he is pleased to own and favor." — *Dodridge*.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,

9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

7. *For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because, &c.* A specific reason is here assigned for that joy which is expressed generally in ver. 4, in reference to the faith and love of Philemon, ver. 6, namely, that his love had been not only a sentiment, but an active principle, resulting in benefactions bestowed on his fellow-men. ¶ *Because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee.* "For your kindness to them. The word *bowels* here probably means *minds, hearts*, for it is used in the Scriptures to denote the affections. The sense is, that the kindness he had shown to Christians had done much to make them happy." — *Barnes*. See note on 2 Cor. vi. 12. Thus skilfully and tenderly does Paul here approach his main subject. He desired the performance of a Christian act by Philemon, which he had authority to command or "enjoin," ver. 8, but which he preferred to "beseech" as a favor, ver. 9. But, before naming his request, he expressed his joy that Philemon had heretofore given evidence of his willingness to comply, by the habitual manifestation of a Christian spirit. See note on Rom. i. 8.

8. *Wherefore, though I might be much bold, &c.* Though I am authorized, as an apostle of Christ, to enjoin his disciples in reference to their duty, and therefore might be bold in announcing my command. ¶ *To enjoin thee that which is convenient.* "To enjoin upon thee that which is befitting." — *Conybeare*. "The apostle implies here, that what he was about to ask was proper to be done in the circumstances; but he does not put it on that ground, but rather asks it as a personal favor. It is usually not best to command a thing to be done if we can as well secure it by asking it as a favor. Comp. Dan. i. 8, 11, 12." — *Barnes*.

9. *Yet for love's sake.* For the sake and as an expression of the love which you cherish towards me, and towards all the true disciples of Christ. ¶ *I rather beseech you.* I beseech or entreat you, rather than exercise my authority to command you, as I might, ver. 8. ¶ *Being such a one as Paul the aged, &c.* "Years bespeak respect, and the motions of such, in things lawful and fit, should be received with regard. The request of an aged apostle, and now suffering for Christ and his gospel, would be tenderly considered. If thou wilt do anything for a poor, aged prisoner, to comfort me in my bonds, and make my chain lighter, grant me this which I desire. Hereby in a sort you will do honor to Christ, in the person of an aged, suffering servant of his, which doubtless he will take as done to himself." — *Henry*. "Although, at the stoning of Stephen, Saul is said to have been a young man, Acts vii. 58, it does not imply that he was a mere youth. The witnesses laying their clothes at his feet, and his immediately taking an active part in persecuting the disciples, but especially in receiving a commission for that purpose from the chief priests, are proofs that he possessed both judgment and experience. Wherefore at the stoning of Stephen he may have been thirty years old; at which age he might very properly be called a young man. Between the death of Stephen and Saul's conversion some time elapsed. From the time of his conversion to the writing of this letter he had labored in the gospel near thirty years; so that being now sixty years old or more, he was really an aged person." — *Macknight*.

10. *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus.* My son in the faith, converted through my ministry, "In the orig-

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me :

12 Whom I have sent again : thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels :

13 Whom I would have re-

tained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel :

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing ; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

inal, the name Onesimus is reserved to come in last in the sentence. The order of the Greek is this: 'I entreat thee concerning a son of mine, whom I have begotten in my bonds, — Onesimus.' Was there ever more delicacy evinced in preparing the way for disarming one of prejudice, and carrying an appeal to his heart? — *Barnes*. ¶ *Whom I have begotten in my bonds.* Who has been converted through my ministry, during my imprisonment. See note on 1 Cor. iv. 15.

11. *Which in time past was to thee unprofitable.* Perhaps he was indolent; or perhaps, if his service was involuntary and enforced, he may not have perceived the propriety of doing more than he was compelled to do. Some suppose that, by this mild term, the apostle referred to the injury which Philemon might have suffered when Onesimus left him without permission. The general idea, however, is sufficiently obvious; the conversion of Onesimus to Christianity had wrought such a change in his feelings towards others, that he would hereafter render more profitable service than before to his employers. ¶ *But now profitable to thee and to me.* He had already rendered valuable service to Paul, who would gladly have retained him as a fellow-laborer, ver. 13, and was prepared to be more serviceable to Philemon than before his conversion.

12. *Whom I have sent again.* That is, to Philemon. There is no reason to suppose that the return of Onesimus to Philemon was involuntary. For aught which appears to the contrary, he went as willingly as Epaphroditus and Tychicus, when Paul sent them on special missions. Phil. ii. 25; Col. iv. 7, 8. In what character and for what purpose he was sent, see note on ver. 16. ¶ *Thou therefore*

*receive him, that is, mine own bowels.*

For the manner in which *σπλάγχνα*, *bowels*, is used in the New Testament, see note on 2 Cor. vi. 12. "Do thou receive him as my own flesh and blood." — *Conybeare*. "Do thou therefore receive him with readiness and affection. Receive him, did I say? Nay, rather receive, as it were, my own bowels; a person whom I so tenderly love, that he may seem to carry the heart of Paul along with him wherever he goes." — *Doddridge*. "One whom I consider as a part of myself. As Bengelius observes, by laying aside his apostolical authority, St. Paul had brought himself to a level with Philemon. And now, to exalt Onesimus, and to display that dignity which a man acquires by becoming a sincere Christian, he calls him not *his son* simply, but *his own bowels*; or, as it is expressed ver. 17, *his very self*." — *Macknight*.

13. *Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead, &c.* For some reason, Philemon was under very great obligations to Paul, ver. 19. Paul sorely needed the assistance of some friend while in confinement as a prisoner. By expressing his desire, he at the same time suggested his right, to retain Onesimus as the proxy of Philemon, to render such offices of kindness as he needed; for whatever was the precise relation existing between Onesimus and Philemon, it is manifest that the former owed some kind of service to the latter.

14. *But without thy mind would I do nothing, &c.* I would not do this without your consent, lest I should appear to compel you to repay the obligation which you owe me, or to take advantage of the present circumstances, to obtain from you a benefit through necessity, which you would

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever ;

16 Not now as a servant, but

not render willingly. I therefore permit his return to you, trusting that you will manifest your gratitude by granting a favor in which I am deeply interested, ver. 17-22.

15. *Perhaps he therefore departed for a season.* Perhaps this may be the result of his temporary absence. Not that Onesimus designed to accomplish this purpose; but that it may be accomplished through the overruling providence of God. Compare Gen. xlv. 7, 8; 1. 19-21. ¶ *That thou shouldest receive him forever.* That he may be bound to thee by more endearing ties; that he may be prompted by Christian affection, rather than constrained by duty, to remain with thee permanently.

16. *Not now as a servant.* The word οὐκέτι, translated *not now*, properly means "no more, no further, no longer." — Robinson. It is translated *henceforth*, John xv. 15. It conveys the idea of change or transition from one condition or one state of things to another. In this place it indicates that Onesimus had passed, or was about to pass, from the condition of δούλος, *a servant*, to that of ἀδελφός, *a brother*. "But still, it is not certain what *kind* of a servant he was. The word does not necessarily mean *slave*, nor can it be proved from this passage, or from any other part of the epistle, that he was at any time a slave. The word denotes *servant* of any kind, and it should never be assumed that those to whom it was applied were slaves. It is true that slavery existed in the heathen nations when the gospel was first preached, and it is doubtless true that many slaves were converted; but the mere use of the word does not necessarily prove that he to whom it is applied was a slave. If Onesimus was a slave, there is reason to think that he was of a most respectable character, and indeed all that is implied in the use of the term here, and all that is said of him, would be met by the supposition that he was a *voluntary*

above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord?

*servant*, and that he had been, in fact, intrusted with important business by Philemon." — Barnes. It has pleased God, by a notable manifestation of his power, to erase the foul blot of slavery from our national escutcheon. While it remained, its advocates quoted this epistle as a choice morsel in its defence, insisting that Paul described Onesimus as a slave, and that he taught the duty, by his example, of arresting and returning fugitive slaves to their masters. But what evidence is there that Onesimus was a slave, as the word is now understood? He is called δούλος. This word occurs one hundred and twenty-five times in the New Testament. It is once translated *bondman*, six times *bond*, and one hundred and eighteen times *servant*; but not once *slave*. Supposing *bond* and *bondman* to indicate slavery, *servant* certainly is not used in that sense in the great majority of cases in which it occurs as a translation. Without attempting to exhibit its various shades of signification, — always including the idea of obligation of some sort, — I remark that many of the apostles style themselves *servants* of the Lord, Rom. i. 1; James i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Rev. i. 1. Indeed, our Lord styled all his apostles *servants*; and in one passage, remarkably similar to that which is now under consideration, he announces a change in their relation to him, as Paul here announces a change in the relation of Onesimus to Philemon. He says, "Οὐκέτι ὑμᾶς λέγω δούλους, *henceforth I call you not servants* (or, more properly, *I no longer call you servants*), but I have called you friends." John xv. 15. So here, "Οὐκέτι ὡς δούλον, *not now as a servant* (or, *no longer as a servant*), but above a servant, a brother beloved." Did any person ever suppose that our Lord manumitted his apostles, or that they ever were *slaves* to him, because he assured them that they should *no longer* be called *servants* but *friends*? And why need it be sup-

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee,

posed that Onesimus was ever a slave to Philemon, because Paul declared that he should *no longer* be a *servant*, but a *brother*? The form of speech is the same in both cases; and previous subjection to involuntary slavery is no more implied in the one than in the other. But suppose Onesimus *was* a slave when he left Philemon; he was not returned by Paul *as a slave*. On the contrary, it is distinctly declared that he should "not now," or any longer, be regarded as a servant, whatever condition in life the word may here represent, but that he should be henceforth "above a servant, a brother beloved." Doubtless, he owed certain services to Philemon, whether as an absolute slave, or as a voluntary servant in consideration of favors previously received or of a mutual contract. But all these obligations, of whatever nature, were to be henceforth considered as cancelled. Paul required this on two grounds: (1.) Philemon was under obligations to him, and could not reasonably refuse to grant his request. (2.) Paul offered to repay or make good any pecuniary loss which Philemon might have suffered in consequence of the departure or other previous misconduct of Onesimus. ¶ *Specially to me.* Paul felt a peculiar interest in those who were converted under his personal ministry. 1 Tim. i. 2; Titus i. 4. Onesimus was one of this class, ver. 10. ¶ *Both in the flesh and in the Lord.* "Meaning both in his outward and his inward man."—*Bloomfield*. Both temporally and spiritually. He will be more valuable to thee than ever before, because, in whatever service he may be employed, he will be more diligent and conscientious than he was before his conversion, and because, having become a fellow-disciple, he will add much to your spiritual growth by his sympathy and advice.

17. *If thou count me therefore a partner, &c.* This word, variously translated *partner, fellowship, companion, and*

or oweth *thee* aught, put that on mine account;

19 I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it*:

*partaker*, conveys the idea of common interest; and the meaning here seems to be, if thou regard me as a fellow-Christian, receive Onesimus as freely and as cheerfully as you would receive me, for he also is a Christian.

18. *If he hath wronged thee.* If he was guilty of misconduct while in thy service, or if his departure occasioned pecuniary loss. ¶ *Or oweth thee aught.* If he received property which he has not fully accounted for, or if he was overpaid and owed further service. ¶ *Put that on mine account.* Consider me bound to make good all deficiencies. "I will repay it." Ver. 19.

19. *I Paul have written it with my own hand, &c.* "It has been inferred from this, that Paul wrote this entire epistle with his own hand, though this was contrary to his usual practice. He undoubtedly meant to refer to this as a mark of special favor towards Philemon, and as furnishing security that he would certainly be bound for what he had promised."—*Barnes*. ¶ *I will repay it.* From what follows, it is not probable that Paul expected payment would be demanded, inasmuch as Philemon was under such great obligations to him. But to prevent the possibility of a refusal to receive Onesimus kindly, he made the promise, and if payment was demanded it was doubtless made, even to the uttermost farthing. ¶ *Albeit I do not say to thee, &c.* "I might request thee to put up that debt or damage in exchange of those spiritual gifts which thou hast received by my means; but in this I will gladly forego my own right, intending to give thee full and entire satisfaction for any damage thou hast sustained by Onesimus."—*Assemb. Annot.* This was a very delicate intimation to Philemon, that if he granted all which was requested, Paul would by no means be his debtor, and that it would be exceedingly ungracious in him either to deny the request or to demand payment.



albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that

through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow labourers.

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.

20. *Let me have joy of thee.* Namely, by granting the favor which I ask; I will regard it as prompted by the spirit of the Lord. ¶ *Refresh my bowels in the Lord.* Relieve my anxiety. See note on 2 Cor. vi. 12.

21. *Having confidence in thy obedience, &c.* In this verse Paul expresses his confidence that Philemon would grant the specific favor requested, and that his gratitude would prompt him to do even more.

22. *Prepare me also a lodging, &c.* Philemon was accustomed to perform acts of kindness to Christians, ver. 5; perhaps Paul had heretofore shared his hospitality. He hoped soon to be delivered from imprisonment, and to visit Colosse, and hence desired that a temporary abiding-place might be secured.

23. *There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner, &c.* The same as Epaphroditus, prominent among the founders and pillars of the Colossian Church. See note on Col. iv. 12. The fact of his imprisonment is not mentioned in the epistle to that church; but as Philemon was one of its members, the brethren would naturally be informed by him, and needed not special information in both epistles sent at the same time.

24. *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas.* See notes on Col. iv. 10, 14.

25. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* See note on Rom. xvi. 20.

The subscription to this epistle is probably true, though, like many others, it is entirely destitute of canonical authority.

# EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

## CHAPTER I.

**G**OD, who at sundry times  
and in divers manners

## CHAPTER I.

It is well known that critics do not agree in opinion concerning the authorship of this epistle. It differs from the undoubted epistles of Paul, not only in style, but in that his name is not placed at the beginning, the church to which it was sent is not named, nor does it contain any distinct marks by which its date can be determined. It does not fall within my plan to enter upon a full discussion of the authorship, date, or canonical authority of this epistle, nor even to present a synopsis of the various arguments which have been urged on either side of the disputed points. This has been done by others, whose works are accessible to those who would examine the subject critically. I would refer such students especially to the very elaborate "Introduction" to this epistle, pp. 7-267, by Professor Stuart. I adopt, without hesitation, his conclusions on the two points of utmost consequence, namely, that Paul was the author of this epistle, and that it has full canonical authority. I adopt, also, as substantially correct, the following compendious synopsis of the epistle itself. "This epistle was wrote to persons who had been illuminated, or had become Christians already, as appears from ch. x. 32. It was to such as had suffered persecution for Christ, ch. xii. 4-12. It was therefore wrote to Hebrew Christians,

spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son,

that is, to such as from Jews had become Christians; and it was wrote to keep them steady to their profession, or to guard them from relapsing into Judaism. The arguments therefore, all along urged, are such as prove Christianity to be an institution in every respect superior to, and more excellent than, the law of Moses; that there was no one thing in which a Jew could boast, nor was there any one advantage in that law, but it was to be seen, or to be had, in a much better manner, under the law of Christ. The apostle therefore sets out, chapter the *first*, with proving that the Son of God, who gave the law to Christians, is far superior even to angels, who delivered the law to Moses; and therefore that the obligation to attend to what Christ said was greater than to give heed to what they had said. And whereas the Jews might object, that Jesus was made lower than the angels, by becoming incarnate, and dying as he did, the design of the second chapter is to remove this difficulty. Chapter iii. is to prove Christ superior to Moses, and more worthy of honor, as much as a *son* is more worthy of regard than a *servant*. Chapter iv. is to show that the *rest* promised to Christians is more excellent than the rest which was promised to the Jews. And here the apostle earnestly presses them to act in such manner that they may not fall short of it, as their fathers in the wilderness did of Canaan. Chapter v. shows that Christ was called of

whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

God to be a high priest, as much as was Aaron. And as the high priesthood of Christ was more excellent than that of Aaron, here, too, Christians had the advantage above the Jews. Chapter vi. is a digression, containing a strong exhortation to the Jews to hold fast the faith and hope they had been instructed in, and to rest assured that God would certainly perform the promise made to Abraham, that in his seed should all the earth be blessed. Chapter vii. the apostle returns to his subject, which was to show that Christ was a Priest after the order of Melchisedec; and therefore had a more excellent priesthood than any of those had who were priests after the order of Aaron. Chapter viii. is taken up in showing that Christ hath obtained a more excellent ministry, as he is the mediator of a better covenant than that which was made with their fathers in the wilderness. It is a covenant that is not to decay, or wax old, as the Mosaic covenant did, and was designed to do. It was a covenant that was wrote in men's hearts, and was to last forever. Chapter ix. contains a particular account of the tabernacle and the sacrifices offered in it; and comparing them with the sacrifice of Christ, the apostle shows that those were in every respect inferior to this. The tabernacle of the Jews was a worldly tabernacle; that which Christ entered was a heavenly one. The blood of their sacrifices purified only the flesh; the blood of Christ purges the conscience. Christ did more by once for all entering into the true holy of holies than their high priests could do by entering once every year all their lives long continually. Chapter x. shows that the sacrifices under the law could not make the comers thereto perfect, but the sacrifice of Christ effectually did this, by perfecting forever them that are sanctified. The rest of this epistle consists in showing the use and advantage of faith, and in several exhortations to bear the evils

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and up-

they were exposed to on account of their profession." — *Sykes*.

1. *God, who at sundry times, &c.* God is admitted to be the original source of all spiritual knowledge which has been communicated to mankind, through whatever channel. The writer of this epistle does not attempt to exalt the gospel by representing the law as false, nor to establish the dignity of Christ's character by denouncing Moses and the prophets as impostors. On the contrary, he admits them to have been true prophets of God, and their message to have been true to whatever extent it reached. He claimed only that the same God who had revealed some truth through the prophets, had revealed more important truth through his Son, who was more highly exalted than the very chiefest of the prophets. ¶ *And in divers manners.* In many ways. The prophets not only appeared "at sundry times," or in different ages of the world, but they communicated their messages with more or less distinctness, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ¶ *In time past.* In ancient times; embracing the whole period from Adam to Malachi, the last of the recognized Hebrew prophets, who lived about four hundred years before the advent of our Lord. ¶ *Unto the fathers.* To the ancient Jews, the ancestors of the writer and of those whom he addressed. ¶ *By the prophets.* Namely, Moses and all others through whom God had made communications to the Jewish people.

2. *Hath in these last days.* The close of the Mosaic dispensation and the commencement of the Messiah's reign on earth was a period to which the phrase "last days" was frequently applied. See notes on Acts ii. 17; 1 Tim. iv. 1. ¶ *Spoken to us by his Son.* "The word 'us' here does not of necessity imply that the writer of the epistle had actually heard him, or that they had heard him to whom the epistle was written. It means that

holding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat

down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 Being made so much bet-

God had now communicated his will to man by his Son. It may be said with entire propriety, that God has spoken to us by his Son, though we have not personally heard or seen him. We have what he spoke and caused to be recorded for our direction."—*Barnes*. ¶ *Whom he hath appointed heir of all things*. "That is, Lord or Proprietor of all things; for, according to Paul, Gal. iv. 1, 'The heir is Lord of all.'"—*Macknight*. See notes on Acts x. 36; Rom. viii. 17. ¶ *By whom also he made the worlds*. Or constituted the ages. "The word *αἰῶνες*, which we render *worlds*, does not signify the heavens and earth and all things in them; but it means properly *ages*, or certain periods of time, in which such or such things were done, or were to be done. Such were the Patriarchal; that of the Law; that of the Messiah; that of the Antediluvians; that of the four great Empires which the prophet Daniel spoke of. These were properly *αἰῶνες*, *ages*. No more seems to be designed, than that God, by him, made, disposed, ordered, the several great and remarkable *periods of time* from the creation, so as to bring about his ends, or what he purposed to do. Nor is there any one instance in the New Testament, where more than this seems to be meant by this word."—*Sykes*.

3. *Who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person*. He was the representative of his Father. In him dwelt "the fulness of the Godhead bodily." See note on Col. ii. 9. So fully did he display the character of God, as the Father and Friend of the human race, that he might well say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." See note on John xiv. 9. Hence he was "worthy of more glory than Moses," by as much as a "son" holds a higher rank than a "servant." Ch. iii. 2, 5, 6. This fact is urged as a reason why the Hebrews, while they acknowledged Moses as a prophet, should much more admit

the claims of Jesus as a divine messenger, and accept his message as the truth of God. ¶ *Upholding all things by the word of his power*. "Ruling and directing all things in the new dispensation, by authority derived from the Father."—*Imp. Ver. note*. "Carrying all things as it were in his hands. Directing, governing, ruling all things by the word of his power. All power is given to Christ in heaven and in earth. Matt. xxviii. 18. All things are delivered unto me of my Father. Matt. xi. 27. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands. John iii. 35; xiii. 3."—*Sykes*. ¶ *When he had by himself purged our sins*. Jesus Christ came into the world to "save his people from their sins," to "take away the sin of the world," to "redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Matt. i. 21; John i. 29; Tit. ii. 14. "St. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, made use of the sacrificial term, common and familiar in those days; but now, where no such practices are in use, it is become more difficult, especially where words are metaphorically used, to define the exact idea intended to be conveyed. Christ is here said to have cleansed us from our sins; and, having done this, to have sat at the right hand of God. It does not follow, from this manner of expression, that Christ was deemed an expiatory sacrifice to purge or cleanse us from sin, any more than that the Father of all was deemed an expiatory sacrifice, when Job says to him, 'Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?' It is not said here, by what particular means, or by what method, Christ took away our sins, but only the *fact* is asserted. He did it not by any of those means prescribed in the law, but by what he did himself; not by any sacrifice of animals, not by any washings or purifications, not by any of those rites or ceremonies which were practised by the

ter than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou

law, but by himself, that is, by his condescension to become incarnate, and to undertake our redemption." — *Sykes*. ¶ *Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*. See notes on Acts ii. 33-36; Eph. i. 20-22.

4. *Being made so much better than the angels*. In assuming a mortal body, and becoming subject to death, Jesus "was made a little lower than the angels;" nevertheless he was crowned with glory and honor, and all things were "put in subjection under him," ch. ii. 7-9; consequently he was better and more to be honored than the angels, to whom God "hath not put in subjection the world to come," or the "new dispensation," ch. ii. 5. See note on ver. 2. ¶ *As he hath by inheritance obtained*, &c. "Or, in virtue of his name, the Son of God; an exaltation such as is implied in that name. As a son has a rank in a family above servants, as he has a control over the property above that which servants have, so it is with the Mediator. He is the Son of God; angels are the servants of the church. They occupy a place in the universe compared with that which he occupies, similar to the place which servants in a family occupy, compared with that which a son has. To illustrate and prove this is the design of the remainder of this chapter." — *Barnes*.

5. *For unto which of the angels said he at any time*. Equivalent to, he hath never said unto any angel. "If we may credit Abarbanel, the ancient Jewish doctors held that the Messiah would be exalted above Abraham, Moses, and the angels. However this may be, the apostle, in applying this and the following quotations to the Messiah, must have supposed himself addressing those who would readily concede that they ought to be thus applied. Otherwise, we cannot suppose that he could have regarded this mode of reasoning as at all efficacious, or

art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son?

6 And again, when he bring-

adapted to convince those to whom he wrote." — *Stuart*. ¶ *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*. Ps. ii. 7. "These words, whether spoken of a son in general, or of the Son of God in particular, are a clear proof of a superiority and dignity in the son spoken of; and that was the thing to be shown. It follows presently in the Psalm, 'Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' Ps. ii. 8. So again, when it is said in Scripture, 'I will be his Father, and he shall be my son,' 2 Sam. vii. 14, the citation is only to show what dignity and pre-eminence is kept up when a son is spoken of. It is a language that is never confounded with what is said of servants; and consequently, as Christ is the Son of God, he must have a greater regard paid him than is ever paid to angels, as much as the son of any family is greater than the servant of it. Ch. iii. 3-6." — *Sykes*.

6. *And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world*. "Most evidently the writer means to appeal to a passage of Scripture, which he regards as having relation to the introduction of the Messiah among men. He means, therefore, to say, that 'on another occasion (different from those he had just named), God says, when speaking of the Messiah as introduced into the world, Let all the angels,' &c. The usage of the sacred writers in speaking of that which is declared to be done or predicted, as being done by the prophets who make such declaration or utter such prediction, is well known. See Jer. i. 10; Isa. vi. 10. Πρωτότοκον, so far as the etymology is concerned, may mean first-born, or first-begotten. The latter is the sense here, because the Son is here considered as related to the Father. But the title first-begotten I do not regard as having reference here to time merely

eth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

or principally, but, meaning the Son who has the pre-eminence above all things, and is destined to the throne of the kingdom. There is scarcely room for any doubt, moreover, that the writer means to quote here from Ps. xcvii. 7."—*Stuart*. See note on Col. i. 18. ¶ *Let all the angels of God worship him.* Let them do homage to him as to a superior being. See notes on Acts x. 25, 26.

7. *And of the angels he saith, &c.* The writer proceeds to show, by other quotations from the Jewish Scriptures, that the angels are described as inferior to the Son; and this was the special fact which he desired to impress on the minds of his readers. "He gives to them an inferior name, and assigns to them a more humble office. They are mere ministers, and have not ascribed to them the name of Son. They have a name which implies a more humble rank and office, the name 'spirit,' and the appellation of a 'flame of fire.' They obey his will as the winds and the lightnings do. The object of the apostle in this passage is to show that the angels serve God in a ministerial capacity, as the winds do, while the Son is Lord of all."—*Barnes*. The quotation is from Ps. civ. 4.

8. *But unto the Son he saith.* Rather, concerning the Son. The phraseology in the original is the same here as in the beginning of ver. 7. ¶ *Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.*—"God is thy throne forever and ever."—*Imp. Ver.* and *Wakefield*. "It is not that a son is to have but a common share of favor with others, even with those that may partake of some degrees of kindness; but a son is eminently to be distinguished from all others, and to be raised above them, and to partake of joy and gladness, of power and authority, paramount to all others. It was a Son to whom it was said, God is the support of thy throne forever and

8 But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom.

9 Thou hast loved righteous-

ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—*Sykes*. The Trinitarian hypothesis, that Jesus Christ is here recognized as the Supreme God, cannot easily be made to harmonize with the immediate context, nor with the general testimony of the Scriptures. To say that the Son is the brightness of his own glory and the express image of his own person, that he is seated at the right hand of himself on high, ver. 3; that he is his own Father and his own Son, and that he begot himself, ver. 5, and that, as a God superior to himself, he anointed himself, exalting himself above others, ver. 9,—is certainly using language not easily understood, if not absolutely absurd. The quotation is from Ps. xlv. 6. Whether the Psalmist had reference, primarily, to the Messiah, or to his own son, the context clearly shows that he did not intend to ascribe supreme power to the person addressed, for he recognizes another superior to him, saying, "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee," &c., ver. 9. The same distinction is made by the apostle, in i Cor. xv. 27. "For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him." ¶ *A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.* "Or, *thy reign is just.*" The former clause declares the perpetuity of the Son's reign; the present one, its equitable nature. Both speak of the future. It is quite plain, too, that the two clauses are a poetic parallelism, as they belong to Ps. xlv. 6; and also that the subject of both clauses is the same, namely, the dominion or reign of the Son or Messiah."—*Stuart*

9. *Thou hast loved righteousness, &c.*

ness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

10 And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the founda-

tion of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.

11 They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

Thou hast been righteous, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and therefore, "made higher than the heavens." Ch. vii. 26. ¶ *Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee, &c.* "The phrase is equally susceptible of the rendering, 'God, thy God, has anointed thee,' &c., and this without any alteration of the general sense of the passage. As to the phrase 'oil of gladness,' it means perfumed or odoriferous oil, which was exhibited and used on occasions where there was much festivity and gladness. A joyful occasion would be the coronation season of the King Messiah, when the most precious and costly oil would be used to anoint him for his office. God has bestowed a higher reward, a greater honor on the King Messiah, than on any other kings. He has made him 'King of kings and Lord of lords.' Thus much for the words. The general sentiment remains to be stated. The words are quoted from Ps. xlv. 6, 7. That this whole Psalm relates to the Messiah has been generally believed by the Jewish and Christian commentators; and it is at last acknowledged by Rosenmüller, in the second edition of his *Comm. in Psalmos*. All other explanations seem liable to insuperable difficulties; and this, one may hope, will soon be universally felt and acknowledged. That the whole Psalm relates to the Messiah, however, as *mediatorial* king, can scarcely be doubted by any one who compares together all its different parts. This king is called *θεός* (God). Does the word *θεός* here denote the *divine* or the *kingly* nature or condition of the Messiah? Most interpreters, who admit the doctrine of the Saviour's divine nature, contend for the first of these senses; as I have myself once done, in a former publication. But further examination has led me to believe that there are grounds to doubt of such an

application of the word *θεός* in this passage. The king here called *θεός* has for himself a *θεός*; 'thy God hath anointed thee.' The same king has associates, *μετόχους*, that is, others who in some respects are in a similar condition or office. As *divine*, who are the *μετόχοι* with the Saviour, to whom he is preferred? Besides, his equity, his government, his state, as described in Ps. xlv., are all such as belong to the King Messiah. Now as Elohim is a title sometimes given to kings or magistrates (see in Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6, comp. John x. 35, for in Exo. vii. 1 and iv. 16, it is a different case), although no one individual king or magistrate is ever called simply Elohim, may not this title be applied in a sense altogether *peculiar* and pre-eminent to the Messiah as king, designating his great superiority over all other kings, and distinguishing him as *σύνδραπος* with God, as 'King of kings and Lord of lords'? Rev. xvii. 14." — Stuart.

10. *Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, &c.* This language is found in Ps. cii. 25. "The immutability of God is here declared as a pledge of the immutability of the kingdom of Christ. 'To show (says Mr. Emlyn, works, vol. ii. p. 340), how able his God, who had anointed him, was to make good and maintain what he had granted him, a durable kingdom for ever and ever.'" — *Imp. Ver., note.*

11, 12. *They shall perish, but thou remainest, &c.* See note on Matt. xxiv. 35. We need not understand the writer to predict the annihilation of the material universe; but we may rather suppose that, by this Hebrew form of speech, he designed to assert that the Maker is more permanent than the works of his hands. Or, it is not unnatural to apply what is said in ver. 10-12, like 2 Pet. iii. 10-13, to the

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minis-

ter for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

## CHAPTER II.

**T**HEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.

2 For if the word spoken by

periods of time, or various "dispensations" referred to in ver. 2. If this latter be the true meaning, then the language may be understood as spoken concerning the Son rather than the Father. We cannot, however, properly interpret it as referring to the perpetuity of the Son's reign or kingdom, as the Messiah; because it is elsewhere asserted that that kingdom shall have an end when its object shall have been accomplished. 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

13. *But to which of the angels said he*, &c. The superiority of the Son is again asserted. God hath not at any time exalted any angel to his own right hand, nor put all things under his feet. See note on Acts ii. 34, 35.

14. *Are they not all ministering spirits*, &c. They are servants, not rulers, and therefore inferior to him who is "the author and finisher of our faith." Ch. xii. 2. "When the prophet speaks of his exalted station, as subduing the grand enemies of mankind, sin and death, the expressions, surely, are not applicable to angels, who were not the givers of the law and the gospel, but merely the instruments employed in those services." — *Gilpin*.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed*, &c. "The sense is, since Christ, the author of the new dispensation, is so far exalted above the prophets, and even the angels, we ought to give the more earnest attention to all that has been spoken." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Lest at any time we should let them slip*. The word παραρρηνόμεν

occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, and it is variously translated here. The marginal reading is, "run out as leaking vessels." "Lest we be spilt." — *Tyndale*. "Lest by any means we let them flow by us." — *Haweis*. "Here the word means, that we should not let what we have heard slip by us, or run out of us, through any negligence or carelessness. The figure is taken from water, which easily flows by one, if it be not stopped and by that means kept." — *Sykes*. A similar idea is expressed, under a different figure, in Jas. i. 23-25, where we are admonished not to be forgetful hearers of the word, but doers of the work.

2. *For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast*. God gave the Law to Israel by his servant Moses; but it was the common opinion among the Jews, that the communication to Moses was through the intervention of angels. This prevalent opinion was recognized by the martyr Stephen, Acts vii. 38, 53, when he reminded those who were thirsting for his blood, that they "received the law by the disposition of angels, and had not kept it." ¶ *And every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward*. An adequate retribution. "This was the character of the law. It threatened punishment for each and every offence, and made no allowance for transgression in any form." — *Barnes*. It is observable that "a just recompense of reward" is not represented as merely denounced against transgressors, but as having been actually "received." Hence, it is manifest that the "recompense of reward,"



angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;

which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and won-

prescribed by the law of Moses, did not involve the endless misery of transgressors; otherwise all who were under that law utterly perished, for they "received" the recompense, or endured the penalty of transgression. And if the law, which is styled the ministration of death and of condemnation, did not denounce endless misery as the just reward of sin, we cannot reasonably expect to find such a penalty in the gospel, which is styled the ministration of the spirit and of righteousness. See notes on 2 Cor. iii. 7-10.

3. *How shall we escape, &c.* That is, we cannot escape. God is "a just God and a Saviour." Isa. xlv. 21. Under the gospel, as well as under the law, we are assured that he "will render to every man according to his deeds;" and that "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons." Rom. ii. 6; Col. iii. 25. The retribution administered to the Jews under the law is commended to the consideration of Christians as an example of divine justice, uniform in its operation. See note on 1 Cor. x. 5-10. ¶ *If we neglect so great salvation.* "That is, the Christian religion; for so the word *σωτηρία* sometimes signifies. It is, however, the Christian religion with all its promised blessings and tremendous threats, which is here designated by *σωτηρία*. How can we escape with impunity, if we neglect them? 'Ἀμελήσαντες here means more, however, than simple neglect; it is plainly emphatic in this connection, and means to 'treat with utter disregard or contempt,' such, namely, as would be implied in an apostasy." — *Stuart*. Or if we take the word *salvation* in its more usual sense, as indicating that deliverance from sin which Jesus Christ came to accomplish, Matt.

i. 21; John i. 29; Acts iii. 26; Tit. ii. 14, we learn that as long as we turn a deaf ear to the message of mercy, we fail to experience the effect, or enter into the enjoyment of that salvation. See note on 1 Tim. iv. 10. And so long as we thus remain under bondage to sin, we cannot escape "a just recompense of reward" for all our transgressions. Such is the general truth; its special application here was to the Jews, who were thus admonished that if they neglected or despised the blessing graciously proffered to them, and relapsed into Judaism, they must expect a righteous retribution, even as aforetime. ¶ *Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.* "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John i. 17. The "purpose and grace" of God in regard to mankind was "made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. i. 10. ¶ *And was confirmed to us, &c.* "They who heard him preach, that is, the apostles, were witnesses of what he said, and certified us of its truth. When the apostle here says *us*, he means the church at large. Christians were assured of the truth of what the Lord Jesus spake by the testimony of the apostles; or the apostles communicated it to those who had not heard him in such a manner as to leave no room for doubt." — *Barnes*.

4. *God also bearing them witness, &c.* God did not require that his special messengers should be acknowledged and accredited, nor that their message should be received as divine truth, merely because those messengers were men of strong mental endowments, nor because they had broad views, or were highly cultured, or exhibited a pure moral character. On the contrary, he

ders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?

---

granted ability to his Son to speak as none other man spake, and to perform such miracles as no man could perform unless God were with him, John iii. 2; vii. 46; so that he could require men to believe on him "for the very works' sake." John xiv. 11. See Acts ii. 22. Similar credentials attested the mission of the apostles. See Mark xvi. 20; Acts iii. 6-8; ix. 40; xiv. 10; xix. 11, 12. The general idea is, that the gospel has been confirmed by more striking and abundant miracles than the law; and therefore those who would relapse from Christianity into Judaism would be without excuse. John xv. 22-24.

5. *The world to come, whereof we speak.* "That is, the age of the Messiah, comprehending the present state of his kingdom, and the time of 'recompense of reward,' the inheritance promised by God, and of which we have assurance given by Christ; these things are not put under the disposition of angels, but under the direction and dominion of the Son himself." — *Sykes*. "Equivalent to the *Christian dispensation*, the world as it will be in future, that is, the world as under the reign of Christ." — *Stuart*. See note on ch. vi. 5.

6-8. *But one in a certain place testified.* In Ps. viii. 4-6, contrasting the weakness of man with the power of God displayed in the works of creation, the writer expresses his admiration of the divine favor which gave man dominion over all other creatures. In this place the Psalmist's language "is applied to our Saviour, to whom

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that* is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

---

'the world to come' was subjected, and who was to reign till all things were put under his feet, 1 Cor. xv. 25-28. The apostle argues thus: All things upon earth were subjected unto man, in virtue of the grant made at the beginning, when God said, 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' Gen. i. 28. The Psalmist, commenting upon this grant, says, 'Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.' The Psalmist here extends this grant of dominion further than the original words implied; for the dominion over the works of God's hand is much more than the dominion over the things of the earth. But if you take in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was made man, and consider the power granted to him, not only in earth but in heaven too, what the Psalmist said of man is literally true, 'Thou hast put all things under his feet.' — *Sykes*. Concerning what is implied in putting all things under the feet of Jesus, or subduing all to his authority, see notes on 1 Cor. xv. 24-28. To impress the more fully upon the minds of the Hebrews the superiority of Christ over the angels, the apostle declares that while God has not put the "world to come" under subjection to them, ver. 5, the dominion of Christ is unlimited; "for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God

should taste death for every man.

10 For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing

is not put under him." The only limitation to this universal dominion is expressed by Paul in language which is in strict harmony with this; "when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him." 1 Cor. xv. 27. The Father retained absolute supremacy, but subjected all else to the dominion of his Son; not indeed absolutely and at once, because it is added, "but now we see not yet all things put under him." Some yet remain in rebellion; yet they are prospectively under his dominion; means are in operation which in due time will make them his willing subjects, even as he is subject to the Father. He must reign until this result is fully attained. Then, when the last enemy has been conquered, when all yield a cheerful and hearty obedience, "when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 28. One of the means for the production of this result is mentioned in the next verse.

9. *But we see Jesus, &c.* Although we see not yet an absolute acknowledgment of his rule, yet we see Jesus, properly qualified, tasting death for every man, thus manifesting the strongest interest in their welfare, and exhibiting such love as must ultimately melt all hearts. John xv. 13; Rom. v. 6-10; 1 John iv. 19. ¶ *Who was made a little lower than the angels.* "That is, as a man, or when on earth. His assumed rank was inferior to that of the angels. He took upon himself not the nature of angels (ver. 16) but the nature of man." — *Barnes.* ¶ *That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.* "To taste death is to die; and to taste death for all, or every man, is to die for the benefit of all mankind. Now

our Lord condescended to taste death for all; and the grace and kindness of God was by that means displayed to mankind in a most extraordinary manner, as the apostle explains in the following verses." — *Sykes.* "Only this we see already, that the Messiah that was humbled for a while, even to the death of the cross, for the benefit of all mankind and every man in the world, is now after and for that humiliation of his, rewarded and crowned with glory and honor," &c. — *Hammond.* "For every man. For all, *ὡπὲρ παντὸς*, for each and all, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, high or low, elect, or non-elect." — *Barnes.* Why, then, shall not all be profited thereby? The reason often assigned, together with a fatal objection to the reason so assigned, is thus stated: — "The subject evidently respects the *offer* of salvation, the opportunity to acquire it through a Redeemer; not the actual application of promises, the fulfilment of which is connected only with repentance and faith. But whether such an *offer* can be made with *sincerity* to those who are reprobates (and who, the Saviour knows, are and will be such), consistently with the grounds which the advocates for particular redemption maintain, is a question for the theologian rather than the commentator to discuss." — *Stuart.* That such an offer can be made with sincerity under such circumstances seems incapable of proof by either commentator or theologian. Rather ought we to believe that the blessing is not only *offered*, but will be *bestowed* on all, agreeably to the testimony of our Lord and of the great apostle. John xii. 32; Rom. v. 8-10.

10. *For it became him, &c.* "Now it pleased God, however contrary to Jewish prejudices, that the great Author of our salvation should take upon him the nature of those whom

many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

he redeemed, and pass through a state of suffering."—*Gilpin*. ¶ *Perfect through sufferings*. "To make perfect is to bring to the end for which any person or thing is designed. Now the design of God being to bring many sons unto glory, he determined that Jesus, who was to be their guide and leader on, should pass through a state of sufferings, just as the sons of God were to do in this world, and so to be made perfect, or brought to perfection. Christ, therefore, being brought to his glory, is said to be perfected. Thus, Luke xiii. 32, 'I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected,' that is, brought to that state which is the end for which I am designed."—*Sykes*. "Complete by means of sufferings; that is, to render him wholly qualified for his work, so that he should be a Saviour just adapted to redeem men. This does not mean that he was sinful before, and was made holy by his sufferings; nor that he was not in all respects a perfect man before; but it means that by his sufferings he was made wholly fitted to be a Saviour of men; and that therefore the fact of his being a suffering man was no evidence, as a Jew might have urged, that he was not the Son of God. There was a completeness, a filling up, of all which was necessary to his character as a Saviour, by the sufferings which he endured. We are made morally better by afflictions, if we receive them in a right manner, for we are sinful and need to be purified in the furnace of affliction. Christ was not made better, for he was before perfectly holy; but he was completely endowed for the work which he came to do, by his sorrows."—*Barnes*.

12. For both he that sanctifieth and

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

they who are sanctified are all of one. To sanctify is to make holy, to purify, to consecrate, to set apart. See note on John xvii. 17. It was the mission of Jesus, to "redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. It is here declared that the "captain of salvation" and those whom he leads "unto glory," have a common Father, who "sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." 1 John iv. 14. ¶ *For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren*. "To acknowledge himself as of the same family, and to speak of them as his brothers. That is, he is so represented as speaking of them in the prophecies respecting the Messiah; for this interpretation the argument of the apostle demands. It was material for him to show that he was so represented in the Old Testament. This he does in the following verses."—*Barnes*.

12. *Saying, I will declare, &c.* "The passage is quoted from Ps. xxii. 22. That the 22d Psalm relates to the Messiah, the Jews themselves confess; and the history of his death seems, indeed, to be a kind of practical commentary upon it. The whole object of the present quotation is merely to show that Christ is exhibited in the Jewish Scriptures as having recognized men in the quality of brethren."—*Stuart*.

13. *And again, I will put my trust, &c.* Commentators have found this verse somewhat difficult of interpretation. Those who would see a rather full discussion of the doubtful points may consult *Sykes*, *Macknight*, *Stuart*, and *Barnes*. The more probable opinion is briefly expressed thus: "These two citations being from the same place, Isa. viii. 17, 18, make but one proof

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that

that he who sanctifies, and they who are sanctified, have the same nature; showing that he who said, *I will put my trust in him*, called them whom God had given him, *his children*, or offspring, and so declared them to be of the same nature or original with him." — *Whitby*. Although therefore Jesus "took on him the seed of Abraham," ver. 16, and thus assumed the nature of man, the Jews could not properly regard this as inconsistent with the character of the Messiah; for their own prophets had so described him.

14. *Forasmuch then as the children.* Mankind generally; the human race; the all for whom Jesus "gave himself a ransom," 1 Tim. ii. 6; "every man," for whom he tasted death, ver. 9. ¶ *Partakers of flesh and blood.* Human, and not angelic, ver. 16; mortal. ¶ *He also himself likewise took part of the same.* Jesus himself became incarnate, and assumed a body subject to the same sufferings and death which are common to human nature. ¶ *That through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.* Paul says, "the sting of death is sin." 1 Cor. xv. 56. The same idea is embraced here in the personification of sin under the name of the devil. See note on John viii. 44. By submitting to death, our Lord gave the most convincing proof of his love for mankind, and of his intention to accomplish the work for which he came into the world, namely, "to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John iv. 14; and they who enjoy that present salvation which accompanies faith and "trust in the living God who is the Saviour of all men," 1 Tim. iv. 10, are delivered from the bondage of fear, ver. 15. In regard to them, the sting of death, that which gave death its power as an object of fear, is destroyed. Or, if any insist that a mighty evil spirit is here designated as the devil, dividing the empire of the universe with God, and

through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them, who

having power to inflict death on men, they must acknowledge that his destruction is made certain by the death of Christ. After the last enemy is destroyed, nothing can remain to disturb the harmony and peace of this universe. Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, together with that which is its sting, or him who wields its power. See note on 1 Cor. xv. 56. "Destroy, *καταργήση*. 'The last enemy that shall be destroyed,' *καταργείται*, 'is death.' 1 Cor. xv. 26. So again, 'Who hath abolished,' *καταργήσαντος*, destroyed, 'death,' 2 Tim. i. 10, that is, hath rendered its power vain and ineffectual. Christ took part of flesh and blood, that, by suffering death, he might show the power of death to be nothing, that is, not to be regarded by men, since they were through him to live again, and indeed to live forever. It was necessary, therefore, that Christ should die, that all who believe in him might see a resurrection from the dead, and thence derive a conviction of mind, a fulness of faith, which might carry them through this life with steadiness and firmness, and make them hold out to the end." — *Sykes*.

15. *And deliver them, who through fear of death, &c.* "That is, were under a slavish fear of death. A continual apprehension of being forever under the dominion of death is the bondage or slavery here mentioned. Now our Saviour, bringing life and immortality to the light, or enlightening those doctrines, 2 Tim. i. 10, he having given assurance of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, Tit. i. 2, set all men at liberty from such slavish fears." — *Sykes*. "From this fear we are delivered at present, by our deliverance from that guilt of sin which alone makes it truly terrible, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56; and by the promise of a glorious resurrection, when death shall be swallowed up in victory, ver. 54." — *Whitby*.

through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like

unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

16. *For verily he took, &c.* “Ἐπιλαμβάναται, literally, to grasp, or to take hold of with the hand. Hence figuratively, (1.) to assert one's right to a thing; to lay hold of as one's own; and (2.) to aid, help, succor, to take hold of, when falling or in danger. — The Christian fathers have applied it to the corruption of an angelic nature, which they suppose the writer here denies. But the *usus loquendi* is against this; and the context also; for the apostle had just asserted above that Jesus took on him a nature *human*, and it would be a mere repetition of the same sentiment here, if we construe ver. 16 as meaning this: ‘He did not assume the angelic nature, but that of the seed of Abraham.’ But if the argument be, that Jesus assumed the human nature, because he was to aid men and not angels, then the 16th verse contains a reason why the Saviour did and should take on him the nature of a man; namely, that it was altogether accordant with the great object of his mission.” — *Stuart*. ¶ *He took on him the seed of Abraham.* “He came to help the descendants of Abraham, and consequently as they were men, to become a man. Writing to Jews, it was not unnatural for the apostle to refer to them as the descendants of Abraham, though this does not exclude the idea that he died for the whole human race. It was true that he came to render aid to the descendants of Abraham, but it was also true that he died for all. The fact that I love one of my children, and that I make provision for his education, and *tell* him so, does not exclude the idea that I love the others also, and that I may make to them a simi-

lar appeal when it shall be proper.” — *Barnes*. “He says, ‘Christ had a human nature; this it behoved him to possess, for he came to help the seed of Abraham, that is, those who, being descended from Abraham, possessed a nature that was human.’ His assertion extends merely to such as he was addressing. But surely this would not imply a denial that he helped any others who were possessed of the same nature. So far is it from this, that it implies the contrary; for the amount of the assertion is, ‘he came to help those who possessed a nature such as that which he had assumed.’ So Valckenær.” — *Stuart*.

17. *Wherefore in all things it behooved him, &c.* It was proper that he should become like those for whose benefit he came into the world. It was idle for the Jews to reject Jesus as the Messiah, because he appeared in a human form, or became a man. On the contrary, it was fit and proper that he should do so; and his doing so furnished evidence for, rather than against, his Messiahship. The reason of this fitness or propriety follows. ¶ *That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, &c.* The idea is, that it was needful that he should become a man; that he should experience as we do the infirmities and trials of life, and that by being a man and partaking of all that pertained to man except his sins, he might feel how necessary it was that there should be fidelity in the office of high priest.” — *Barnes*. ¶ *To make reconciliation, &c.* See notes on 2 Cor. v. 18–20.

18. *For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, &c.* “The maxim on which this verse is founded is the following: a state of suffering disposes

## CHAPTER III.

**W**HEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house.

3 For this *man* was counted

persons to be compassionate; and those who endure most afflictions are they who feel most for others. The apostle argues that, among other causes, it was necessary that Jesus Christ should partake of human nature, exposed to trials, persecutions, and various sufferings, that he might the better feel for and be led to succor those who are afflicted and sorely tried. — Those who are peculiarly tempted, and severely tried, have an especial interest in and claim upon Christ. They, particularly, may go with boldness to the throne of grace, where they shall assuredly obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Were the rest of the Scripture silent on this subject, this verse might be an ample support for every tempted soul." — *Clarke*. A similar idea is more fully expressed in ch. iv. 14–16.

## CHAPTER III.

In this chapter, Jesus is declared to be superior to Moses, in like manner as his superiority to the angels had been exhibited in the former chapters.

1. *Heavenly calling*. See note on Rom. i. 6. ¶ *The Apostle and High Priest of our profession*. "The word *Apostle* is by way of eminence put for *one sent of God*; and our Saviour has frequently, in St. John's gospel, spoken of himself as *sent* by his Father. St. Paul, therefore, bids the Hebrews consider Christ, who was higher than the angels; who was for our sakes made lower than they for a short time, but

worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

4 For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things is God.

5 And Moses verily *was faithful* in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a son over

has obtained a more excellent name than they; who was sent by God into the world, and so sent as to taste death; consider him in these capacities, and add to them that he was our High Priest, and entered into the Holy of Holies for us, removing all obstacles to our eternal happiness; and then judge if he be not superior to Moses. Moses was sent into Egypt to redeem the children of Israel, Exod. iii. 10, 12; iv. 13. Our Saviour was *sent*, or was the *apostle* of our profession, to redeem mankind. But then Christ is not only the Apostle, but he is likewise the High Priest, of our profession; and, in consequence, much superior to Moses, and to Aaron, too, as will soon appear." — *Sykes*.

2. *Who was faithful*. "That is, he fully and truly performed the duties of his station." — *Stuart*. See note on ch. ii. 17. ¶ *As Moses was faithful in all his house*. Or, his people; meaning the Jewish people, as in ch. viii. 8, "with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." The reference is to Numb. xii. 7. "My servant, Moses, is not so, who is faithful in all mine house." That is, among my people. The temple was not then builded; and Aaron, not Moses, presided in the tabernacle, which was sometimes styled the house of God.

3–6. *For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses*, &c. Commentators have been somewhat perplexed in seeking the true meaning of this passage. Without attempting a full discussion of the difficulties which either really or apparently exist, I

his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

7 Wherefore as the Holy

content myself with the following paraphrase and note, which seem to place the subject in a sufficiently clear light. "But although the faithfulness of Jesus was not greater than that of Moses, he was counted by God worthy of more power than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath formed the services of the church, not for his own benefit, but for the benefit of others, is a more honorable person than any member of the church, such as Moses was, who needed the services of the Jewish church equally with the people. Besides, every religious society is formed by some one. But he who hath formed all righteous communities and religious societies is God, who, having delegated his authority to his Son, hath made him Lord of all. Now Moses indeed was faithful in forming all the parts of the Jewish church, as a servant who acted according to the directions which he received from God, without deviating from them in the least; because the Jewish church was designed for a testimony of the things which were afterwards to be spoken by Christ and his apostles. But Christ, in erecting the gospel church, was faithful as a Son set over his Father's house as its lawgiver; of whose house we who believe, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, are members, if indeed we hold fast the bold glorying in the hope of resurrection to eternal life, through Christ, firm to the end, which we professed at our baptism.—¶ *As a son over his house.* In the common version it is 'over his own house.' This Pierce thinks a wrong translation; first, because if the church is Christ's own house, to speak of him as a son was improper, by reason that he would have presided over it as its master; second, because the apostle's argument requires that Christ be faithful to the same person, as a son, to whom Moses was faithful as a servant. Wherefore *his house*, in this verse, is God's house, or church.

Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

To show Christ's superiority to Moses, the apostle observes that Moses was faithful only as a servant in God's house; but Jesus was faithful as a son over his house. He makes this observation likewise to show that when he demolished the house reared by Moses, and formed the new house of God, the gospel church, on a plan capable of receiving men of all nations, he used the right which belonged to him as the Son of God, appointed by his Father lawgiver in his church. If we read in this clause, with our translators, *his own house*, it will signify that the church is his, having purchased it with his blood."—*Macknight*. ¶ *If we hold fast the confidence, &c.* A leading object of the writer, through this whole epistle, is to guard his brethren against apostasy. For this purpose he assures them, here, that the Messiah, through whom the gospel is given, and who is denominated the *Son*, in the Old Testament, see ch. i. 5-9, is more worthy of honor and obedience than Moses, the servant of God, whom they recognized as a lawgiver. For the same purpose, he admonishes them that the full present enjoyment of their privileges as members of the church, or of the house of God, depended on their perseverance in faith and confidence. See note on Matt. x. 22. A day was approaching, and was near at hand, when a remarkable distinction was to be made between the friends and the enemies of our Lord. Only those who endured to the end had reason to expect salvation from the terrible destruction so frequently foretold in the Scriptures. Matt. ch. xxiv.; 2 Thess. i. 6, 10. See notes on ver. 17-19.

7-11. *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, &c.* This passage is quoted, almost literally, from Ps. xcv. 7-11. "That is, take heed that ye bring not destruction on yourselves, by revolting from and rebelling against God, as your forefathers did, ten times after



9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

12 Take heed, brethren, lest

their coming from Egypt, Numb. xiv. 22; while they tempted and provoked God, and would not believe his power, though they had testimonies enough of it, by the miracles which they saw done, for the space of so many years together: which was a grieving and wearying of my patience, they never doing what they ought to do, but always the contrary to that. Upon which my irreversible oath went out against them, Numb. xiv. 23, 28-30, that they should never come into Canaan, but leave (every one of them but Caleb and Joshua) their carcasses in the wilderness." — *Hammond*. The Psalmist refers to this ancient example of divine justice, as a solemn warning against apostasy. A similar reference is found in 1 Cor. x. 1-15. For precisely the same purpose, it would seem, the apostle here admonishes his brethren that, if like their forefathers, they should apostatize from the faith, and rebel against the authority of God's duly accredited messenger, they might expect in like manner to be cut off from special privileges, and to be overwhelmed in the common destruction about to befall an unbelieving and disobedient nation.

12. *In departing from the living God.* Apostatizing; forsaking Christianity, and relapsing into Judaism. "The sense of the passage, taken together, is, beware, brethren, of an evil, unbelieving heart, such as the Israelites possessed, lest like them you apostatize from the living God, lest you apostatize from the religion of Christ, which he has required you to receive and maintain, and thus perish like the

there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

15 While it is said, To-day if

ancient Israel who revolted from God." — *Stuart*. A time was near at hand when those who sought safety through apostasy would be overwhelmed in the general destruction of the nation. See notes on Matt. xvi. 25, and on ver. 17, 18.

13. *While it is called to-day.* "That is, as long as you can use this expression; every day." — *Sykes*. As long as life lasts. ¶ *The deceitfulness of sin.* "So that no one may be hardened through sinful delusion. Ἀπάγη τῆς ἀμαρτίας means the sinful delusion which false teachers or Judaizing zealots might occasion; or that delusion into which they might be led by their oppressive condition arising from persecution, or by any allurements of a worldly nature; so that they would become insensible to the warnings which they had received, and might abandon their Christian profession." — *Stuart*.

14. *Partakers of Christ.* Or, members of his household, as in ver. 6; sharers of the benefits resulting from faith and confidence in him. ¶ *If we hold the beginning of our confidence, &c.* If we remain steadfast in faith and confidence. Thus only might any expect to escape the impending calamity. See notes on ver. 6, 17, 18.

15. *While it is said, To-day, &c.* "This is a quotation from Ps. xciv. 7. Paul means, undoubtedly, to make use of this language himself as a direct exhortation to the Christians to whom he was writing. He entreats them, therefore, as long as it could be said 'to-day,' or as long as life lasted, to take care lest they should harden their hearts as had been done in the temptation in the wilderness.

ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he

grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

16. *For some, when they had heard, &c.* This verse, in the common translation, seems not to express such a general apostasy as occurred in the wilderness, in which all the men who came out of Egypt were involved, save Caleb and Joshua only. The original is susceptible of a different translation, more fully expressive of the apostle's idea. "For who are they that hearing did provoke? Were they not all that came forth out of Egypt?" — *Whitby*. "Who were they that, though they had heard, did provoke? Were they not all whom Moses brought forth out of Egypt?" — *Conybeare*. "Who now were they that when they heard did provoke? Were they not all, indeed, who came out of Egypt under Moses?" — *Stuart*.

17, 18. *But with whom was he grieved, &c.* Those who provoked and grieved the Spirit in the wilderness, through the stubbornness of their unbelief, entered not into rest; that is, they did not inherit the promised land, but their "carcasses fell in the wilderness." And it may as well be said here as elsewhere, that there is no intimation in the Old Testament, that the punishment of their unbelief and obstinacy extended beyond the loss of life. Nor does any writer in the New Testament give any such intimation, when exhibiting the wickedness and punishment of the ancient Israelites as examples for the admonition of those "upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. x. 11. On the other hand, they frequently do refer to an impending unparalleled tribulation, Matt. xxiv. 21, when the faithful should enter into rest, and the unbelieving and persecuting enemies of the gospel should be cut off from the earth. Matt. x. 22; xvi. 25; 2 Thess. i. 6-10. And such

seems to be the reference here. "The only thing farther to be observed, and wherein the parallel was to hold most remarkably, and which is the special thing that is pressed in this place, is the fate of the disobedient, murmuring Israelites, which were so impatient of the hardships, that befell them in their passage towards this *rest*, that they frequently and foully fell off from God, and returned to the sins and idolatries and villanies of heathen Egypt, from whence they were rescued by God; all these were excluded from this *rest* of God's giving, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and of that whole generation, only Caleb and Joshua, which were not of the number of these provokers, attained to that *rest*, were allowed entrance into Canaan. And just so the Gnostic Christians, those that in time of persecution forsook Christ, and returned to the heathenish, horrid villanies from which Christianity was designed to rescue them, were never to enter into this rest of God, were certain to be destroyed with the Jews, with whom they struck in and complied; and desiring to *save their lives should lose them*, using their own ways to attain their rest or quiet, should miscarry, and never have part in God's rest: whereas all that have believed, ch. iv. 3, that is, that have or shall adhere and cleave fast to Christ in the present persecutions, and never murmur nor provoke, do certainly *enter into this rest*; as many as survive these persecutions, happy halcyonian days of a peaceful prosperous profession of Christianity were very shortly to attend them. And this is a sufficient means of explaining and understanding that whole fourth chapter of the *rest* and the *sabbatism* (as that is distinctly severed from the seventh

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

## CHAPTER IV.

LET us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of en-

day sabbath, ver. 4), which *remaineth* and is now shortly to be had to the *people of God*, the faithful, sincere, constant Christians, the true Israelites, ver. 9, and so ver. 10, 11, where also the parallel is observed betwixt this *rest* of God's giving, and that *sabbatic rest* which God is said to have rested on the seventh day. For as that was a cessation from all the works of the *six days' creation*, ver. 10, so is this *rest* that is now to befall the Christians a remarkable discernible cessation from all the toils and labors that their persecutions under the Jewish unbelievers had brought upon them, and is accordingly styled *rest*, or *release*, to the persecuted, 2 Thess. i. 7, and days of *refreshment*, or *breathing*, from these toils, see Acts iii. 19; according as it fell out in Vespasian's time, immediately after the destruction of the Jews. So may the word *rest*, prophesied of by the Psalmist, both as it concerned the Jews in David's time, as still future, both after the creation and after the entering into Canaan so many years, and as it yet farther respected the times of Christ, be fitly interpreted *rest from persecutions*, and have one eminent completion in this, the Christians peaceable enjoying of Christian assemblies, which was now through the conduct of God approaching them."—*Hammond*.

19. *Because of unbelief*. The ancient Jews failed to enter the promised land, because they lacked confidence in the protection of God, and sought safety elsewhere. So those whom the apostle here addresses were in danger of perishing with the enemies of the gospel, by apostatizing from the faith through fear that God would not preserve them in the midst of persecution. Seeking to save their lives, they were in imminent danger of losing them, through

tering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

unbelief, or lack of confidence in God. See note on Matt. xvi. 25.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. *Let us therefore fear, &c.* "Upon those words of God, ch. iii. 15 (an ominous admonition, if it be not heeded), we have great reason to fear, lest that promise of coming to God's rest (as for those others, to Canaan), being made to us, a promise of deliverance from our persecutors, and peaceable days of professing the gospel attending it, we may yet by our disobedience miss of attaining to it."—*Hammond*. In the Old Testament, as well as in the New, faith and obedience are represented as sure of a present reward; that is, the obedient believer enjoys a happiness which is not shared by the ungodly. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Ps. cxix. 165. So in the new dispensation: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." John v. 24. "We which have believed do enter into rest." Ver. 3. This spiritual happiness the apostle describes as a special salvation: "We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." 1 Tim. iv. 10. But besides this inward joy and peace, our Lord and his apostles gave assurance that those who remained steadfast under persecution, and endured unto the end, should be saved from the calamities about to befall the Jewish nation, and should enjoy rest and peace after the power of their persecutors was destroyed. See notes on Matt. x. 22; xvi. 25; 2 Thess. i. 7. In this chapter, the apostle seems to

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remain-

include in the idea of "rest" both present peace of mind and that condition of comparative temporal prosperity which should succeed the destruction of their persecuting enemies.

2. *For unto us was the gospel preached, &c.* "The children of Israel had a promise of rest made to them; and so have we as well as they. The word *gospel* signifies properly *good news*, or *good tidings*, and that is the meaning of that word here. But as that term is now appropriated by custom to the particular good tidings of Christ, it renders this passage very obscure to call the good tidings of a rest the *gospel*. The meaning is, we Christians have had the joyful tidings of God's rest, or a state of happiness in a cessation from all our labors, preached to us, as well as the children of Israel had to them."—*Sykes*. This rest, or cessation from labor, was to be enjoyed during the present life, and was promised both to Jews and Christians, on condition of faith and obedience. The endless welfare of men depends not on such an uncertain tenure: it rests on the good pleasure of God, which he purposed in himself from the beginning. Eph. i. 9, 10; 2 Tim. i. 9. ¶ *Not being mixed with faith*. Not being heartily believed.

3. *Do enter into rest, &c.* By rest, or present happiness, the apostle seems here to refer both to that peace of mind, that confident hope, which those enjoy who trust in the living God, and to that preservation from temporal harm, which our Lord declared should be vouchsafed to believers, when their persecuting adversaries were overwhelmed and destroyed. See note on ver. 1. The key-note to this passage, ver. 1-11, descriptive of rest for believers, from which unbelievers were excluded, seems to be

struck in the following paraphrase of ver. 3: "For as there is such a thing as a rest yet future, for us to hope for, so it is most certain that this is only for constant, persevering believers to enter into; and such must we be, if we mean to enter into God's rest. By God's rest, I mean not that which is so oft called by that name, the sabbath of the seventh day after the creating of the world in six days. There are more rests of God, beside and after that. That mentioned by the Psalmist, Ps. xcv. 8, is called God's rest, though it were many years after the creation of the world. And so there is now a yet future rest for us, happy, peaceable, halcyonian days here in the church of Christ now persecuted, which shall shortly come, after the destruction of Christ's enemies, quiet seasons of worshipping God (answerable to that Canaan that the Israelites, all but the murmurers, possessed, after the expulsion of God's enemies, the Canaanites, &c.), which they that hold out, and are not discouraged by the present pressures, shall attain to, if they live so long, and however [certainly] an eternal rest in heaven, and it nearly concerns us now to attempt to enter into that, and to be very careful to do so."—*Hammond*. ¶ *If they shall enter*. Equivalent to *they shall not enter*. ¶ *Although the works were finished, &c.* Hence the rest mentioned by the Psalmist could not be the original sabbath of rest which followed the work of creation so long before.

4. *For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day, &c.* The quotation is from Gen. ii. 2, and refers to the original sabbath, or God's rest, so to speak.

5. *And in this place again, &c.* Ps. xcv. 11. As this rest was then future,

eth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

after the lapse of so many years from the creation, it is manifest that the Psalmist did not refer to the original sabbath.

6. *Seeing therefore it remaineth, &c.* "The reasoning is this. First, there is such a *rest of God*. This is proved from what the Scripture saith, 'God rested the seventh day from all his works.' Secondly, that *rest* which is spoken of, and which the children of Israel did not enter into, was not *that* rest of God; but though it be called his rest, yet it is not designed to be a cessation from all labor, but only from the labor in the wilderness. Since, then, the rest of God remained unpossessed, notwithstanding Joshua gave the people under his charge possession of Canaan, and we are invited still to come into the rest of God, there must be such a state to and for the people of God." — *Sykes*.

7. *Again he limiteth.* That is, determines, or designates. ¶ *Saying in David.* Cr, by David, or in a Psalm composed by David. Ps. xcv. 7. ¶ *After so long a time.* About five hundred years after the time when Joshua conducted the Israelites into the promised land, and gave them *rest* from their wanderings.

8. *For if Jesus had given them rest, &c.* Or, *Joshua*, as in the margin. "Jesus is the Greek mode of writing Joshua, and there can be no doubt that Joshua is here intended. The object is to prove that Joshua did not give the people of God such a rest as to make it improper to speak of a

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,

*rest* after that time. The 'other day' here referred to is that which is mentioned before by the phrase '*to-day*,' and refers to the time in which it is spoken of long after Joshua, to wit, in the time of David." — *Barnes*.

9, 10. *There remaineth therefore a rest, &c.* "It, from all these premises, clearly follows, that there is now for Christians a rest still behind, which all that adhere fast to Christ shall now have their parts in, and of which that place in the Psalm is a typical prediction. And this rest is a rest from toil and labor, a quiet repose of the church, as of the Ark at Jerusalem, in a free exercise of the true religion, such as will be had after the destruction of the persecutors, parallel to that sabbath wherein God rested from his labors, and hallowed it a day unto his service." — *Hammond*. See notes on 2 Thess. i. 6–10.

11. *Let us labor therefore, &c.* As the Jews failed of obtaining the promised rest in ancient times, so those who are here addressed by the apostle were in danger of a similar failure, through lack of faith. Distrusting the care and protection of God, and seeking to preserve their lives by abandoning the cause of Christ, they were in fact pursuing the path which led directly to destruction. See note on Matt. xvi. 25. The conduct and fate of the "fathers" are here mentioned for the "admonition" of those "on whom the ends of the world had come," as in 1 Cor. x. 1–12.

12, 13. *For the word of God is quick,*

piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked

&c. Or, living, energetic. "And let us not think to deceive or escape that vengeance that awaits all that fall off from Christ, how closely and cunningly soever they do it. For what Christ hath foretold, that he that will save his life shall lose it, and that they only that hold out and endure to the end shall escape, is sure to prove so true that there is no hope by the most artifice, dexterous managery to avoid the force of it; the word of God being, like God himself, vital and operative, piercing into the depths and secrets of men, distinguishing between those which are the hardest to be discriminated, the true and the hypocritical Christian, and, when the actions do not discover, searching into the thoughts and most cunning contrivances, as the priest, in dissecting the sacrifices, observes and separates those things which are most secret, and closest joined together. And no man shall be able to disguise himself so cunningly but he shall be discovered, disclosed, laid open and bare, as the sacrifice when it is first flayed, then cut down the back, and all laid open and discernible before the priest.—It must be observed that this epistle being accommodated to the present condition of the Christians in Judea, who were now daily solicited by the Gnostics, and drawn off from their constancy and purity, doth labor by all arguments to fortify them. And in this chapter doth it by two arguments, one depending on the other. First, from the advantages which they shall reap by a constant adhering to Christ, not only eternal rest in heaven, an ample reward for all their persecutions, whatever they are, but even in this life more peaceable days of professing and worshipping Christ, when the unbe-

and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession.

15 For we have not a high

lying Jews, the persecutors, should be destroyed; and that time was now at hand, ch. x. 37. The second argument is here taken from the severity of Christ's denunciations against these (everywhere in the gospel) which shall thus fall off from him, the 'seed on the stony ground,' and they that are 'scandalized in him,' and they that 'seek to save their lives,' &c., which denunciation, saith the author here, shall, like a divine vengeance (sharper, saith Theophylact, than war or sword was to the rebellious Israelites), certainly find out every one that is obnoxious to it, how secretly soever he have contrived it."—*Hammond*. The foregoing explanation of the *rest* which remained to the faithful, from which the unfaithful were excluded, is in harmony with the predictions of our Lord, while on the earth, and of his apostles, in their preaching and in their epistles. Matt. xvi. 24-28; Luke ix. 23-27; Acts ii. 19-21; 1 Cor. x. 1-12; 2 Thess. i. 6-10; 2 Pet. iii. 10-14.

14-16. *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, &c.* "The division of chapters made in some cases in our epistle is quite inappropriate. Chap. iii. most plainly ought to be united with ch. iv. 1-13; thus comprising all that properly belongs to one and the same subject. Chap. iv. ought to begin at iv. 14, and terminate with the end of ch. v., where there is a transition from doctrine to exhortation."—*Stuart*. In this place, ver. 14-16, the apostle briefly adverts to the fact, more fully stated in ch. ii. 6-18, namely, that Christians should persevere, in the midst of trials and afflictions, because their Master suffered in like manner, and would sympathize with them and grant them all necessary aid. ¶ *That is passed into the heavens.* Or, through

priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and

find grace to help in time of need.

## CHAPTER V.

**F**OR every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things *pertaining*

the heavens, that he might sit at the right hand of God, ch. i. 3. It is generally supposed, however, that this is an allusion to the entrance of the Jewish high priest, once a year, into the holy place, ch. ix. 7, 25. ¶ *In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* "Tried as we are. He was subjected to all the kinds of trial to which we can be, and he is therefore able to sympathize with us and to aid us. He was tempted in the literal sense; he was persecuted; he was poor; he was despised; he suffered bodily pain; he endured the sorrows of a lingering and most cruel death. The importance of the fact, that the great high priest of the Christian profession was 'without sin,' the apostle illustrates at length in ch. vii.-ix. He here merely alludes to it, and says that one who was 'without sin' was able to assist those who were sinners, and who put their trust in him." — *Barnes*. See note on ch. ii. 18. ¶ *And find grace to help in time of need.* "Although the rule here given is never, in any case, improper to be observed, yet the scope of the writer shows at what he here more especially aims. He considers the Hebrews as compassed with infirmity, and as violently tempted by persecution to apostatize from their holy profession, in which circumstances help was most necessary and seasonable for them. Hence he encourages them to come freely to the throne of grace for it, and to expect it through this great high priest, as the effect of grace and favor, and not of their own desert." — *Pierce*.

## CHAPTER V.

Having referred to Jesus as a high priest, in ch. iv. 14-16, which ought

not to be separated by any division from this chapter, the apostle proceeds in what follows, to the end of ch. x., to show that this high priesthood of Jesus was as true and legitimate as that of Aaron, and indeed of a much higher grade. A proper regard for Aaron, therefore, would not induce or justify apostasy from Jesus. "The Jews of that day regarded the office of high priest as the most honorable of all offices then sustained. They looked upon it as their glory, and expected from the functions of it pardon for sin and acceptance with God. How difficult it was to wean them from these views, even those of them who had embraced Christianity, the Acts of the Apostles and almost all the apostolic epistles abundantly testify. But this must necessarily be done, however difficult, if Christianity was to be fully admitted and practised by them. There can be no doubt that the unbelieving Jews would urge, with all their power, upon the new converts to Christianity, the views and feelings which the latter had once possessed in common with them in regard to this subject. It entered into the very essence of Judaism that such views and feelings should be cherished; and this was a trait which distinguished the Jews in a peculiar manner from other nations. The apostle, in addressing the Hebrew Christians, had to contend with such arguments as the adversaries of Christianity among the Jews would bring, in order to shake the constancy of the new converts. The splendor and the supposed importance of the Jewish high priesthood, however, was after all a thing which Jewish Christians must be brought to renounce. How could they, educated as they had been, do this? To satisfy their minds on this subject, the apostle

to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins :

2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way ; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

4 And no man taketh this

honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest ; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

presents a comparison of this office, in all its various aspects, with the office of high priest as sustained by Christ ; and he shows that instead of giving up anything by embracing the new religion, they would only exchange a high priest who was imperfect, who offered sacrifices that effected a purification only external and of a mere temporary efficacy, who officiated in a temple made with hands,—all this they would exchange, by embracing and adhering to the Christian religion, for a high priest without sin, whose sacrifice ‘purged the conscience from dead works,’ and had an everlasting efficacy ; which was offered, too, in a temple not made with hands, of which the Jewish temple with all its splendor and solemn pomp was only a mere image. Could anything now be better adapted to fortify the minds of those to whom he wrote in their Christian profession, and to wean them from their old prejudices ? And is it not allowable, that an apostle should reason in a manner best adapted to the condition and feelings of those whom he addresses ?”—*Stuart*.

1. *For every high priest, &c.* That is, among the Jews ; for the comparison is between Jesus and the Jewish high priest. Every such high priest is selected by a fixed rule, ver. 4, and *ordained*, set apart or consecrated, to officiate in religious matters on behalf of the people ; especially to “offer both gifts and sacrifices,” as sin-offerings, or thank-offerings. It is subsequently declared, ch. vii. 27, 28, that Jesus was consecrated to a holier ministry, and that he presented a more precious and more effectual offering.

2. *Who can have compassion, &c.* “The idea is that of *sympathizing with*. The high priest is taken from among men, in order that he may have a fellow-feeling for those on whose behalf he officiates ; sensible of his own ignorance, he is able to sympathize with those who are ignorant ; and compassed about with infirmity, he is able to succor those who have like infirmities.”—*Stuart*. By becoming incarnate in a human body, Jesus became experimentally acquainted with human sorrows, and qualified to sympathize with the distressed. Ch. iv. 15 ; v. 7.

3. *And by reason hereof, &c.* In consequence of his own infirmities and imperfections, the high priest ought to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for those of the people. See Lev. xvi. 11, 24. In this regard, Jesus was vastly superior to the Jewish high priest. Being “without sin,” ch. iv. 15, and “undefiled,” he had no need to “offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins,” ch. vii. 27.

4. *And no man taketh this honor, &c.* A specific rule was established for succession to the high priesthood. Aaron was divinely appointed by name, and his successors were designated by definite characteristics. No man might assume the office, of his own choice.

5, 6. *So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest.* He did not ambitiously assume that office for the sake of personal honor or glory. “Paul claimed that Christ held that office ; but as he was not descended from Aaron, and as no one might perform its duties without being regularly called to it, it was incumbent on him



**7 Who in the days of his flesh,** and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that

to show that Jesus was not an intruder, but had a regular vocation to that work. This he showed by a reference to two passages of the Old Testament." — *Barnes*. The passages here cited from the Old Testament are contained in two of the Psalms, ii. 7, and cx. 4. That both these Psalms refer to the Messiah is generally allowed by the Jewish Rabbis as well as by Christians; and the latter of the two is expressly so applied by our Lord himself. Matt. xxii. 41-45. ¶ *A priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.* "The simple meaning of the whole phrase is, 'Thou art a priest of an order or rank like that of Melchisedec.' The particulars of the comparison in respect to the priesthood of Christ and Melchisedec are not immediately brought into view, but suspended until the writer has introduced other considerations relative to Christ as a priest, ver. 7-9, and given vent to his feelings of concern for those whom he was addressing, by suggesting various considerations adapted to reprove, ver. 11-14, to warn, ch. vi. 1-9, as well as to excite and animate them, ch. vi. 10-20. In regard to *κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα* [forever], it is to be taken in a qualified sense here, as often elsewhere, e. g., comp. Luke i. 33 with 1 Cor. xv. 24-28. The priesthood of Christ will doubtless continue no longer than his mediatorial reign; for when his reign as mediator ceases, his whole work, both as mediator and as priest, will have been accomplished." — *Stuart*.

**7. Who in the days of his flesh.** While he remained incarnate; while he dwelt on the earth in the form of a man. Of this and the two following verses, "the exact reference, scope, and bearing have been not a little disputed. They would seem to be, as Archbishop Newcome and Stuart regard them, explanatory of ver. 2, being intended to be subservient to the comparison of Christ, as a priest, with the Jewish priests. Hence is evinced the fitness of Christ to be a *compassionate* High

Priest, inasmuch as from his assumption of human nature, and exposure to its infirmities, he can pity the infirmities of others." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *With strong crying and tears.* Reference is here had to our Lord's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, when his sufferings were so acute that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke xxii. 44. There may also be a reference to the ejaculations forced from him when suspended on the cross. Matt. xxvii. 46, 50. ¶ *Was heard in that he feared.* "The word *εὐλαβείας* signifies caution, circumspection, timidity, fear, and, in the New Testament, fear of God, reverence, piety." — *Robinson*. In the margin, we have, "for his piety." The passage is otherwise translated: "Was heard, because he had God in reverence." — *Tyndale*. "Being heard for his reverential awe." — *Haweis*. "Was heard, because he feared God." — *Conybeare*. But the context indicates a different object of fear, to wit, the excruciating death which was so near at hand. His "prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears," were addressed "unto him that was able to save him from death." And the burden of his prayer was, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," Matt. xxvi. 39; yet he submissively added, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." There can be no doubt that our Lord experienced a very vivid apprehension of his approaching agony, and dreaded to meet it. See Luke xii. 50, and note on Matt. iv. 11. For this reason, I prefer the following translations, as more in accordance with the spirit of the passage: "Being delivered from fear." — *Macknight*. "Being delivered from that which he feared." — *Stuart*. He did not, it is true, obtain exemption from death, even in the form which he contemplated with such nervous apprehension; yet he was heard and comforted in regard to what he feared. "There appeared an

was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.—And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and, having said thus, he gave up the ghost." Luke xxii. 43; xxiii. 46. Thus did a holy calm succeed the tumultuous agitation of his spirit, and he met death with composure.

8. *Yet learned he obedience, &c.* "It seems very improper that our author should speak of Christ's learning to obey by his sufferings, as though he had been unaccustomed to obedience before his sufferings. This, therefore, must be understood agreeably to the scope of his discourse, wherein he is designing to show that he acquired a sympathy with us, and so was well qualified to be a high priest for us. The sense of the place, therefore, I take to be this: that by his sufferings he learned how difficult obedience was, and by this means was effectually engaged to pity and succor us, as the high priests of old were to pity and act in behalf of the people from the experience they had of their own infirmity and guilt."—*Peirce*.

9. *Being made perfect.* See note on ch. ii. 10. ¶ *The author of eternal salvation, &c.* "The causer; the agent by whom anything is brought about or done. Christ was the agent by whom all that submitted to him were brought to God, and were entitled to eternal life."—*Sykes*. Faith and obedience have a present reward. See note on 1 Tim. iv. 10.

10. *Called of God a high priest.* "The word here used does not mean that he was appointed by God, or called to the office, in the sense in which we often use the word, but simply that he

10 Called of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of

was addressed as such, to wit, in Psalm cx."—*Barnes*. "Our English version is the same here as in ver. 4, 'he that is called of God, as was Aaron,' but in the Greek the phrases differ."—*Peirce*. ¶ *After the order of Melchisedec.* "According to the form, or manner, or kind of priesthood, or the means of exercising it. The apostle means, that Christ was called to be a high priest after the order of Melchisedec, not by having a series of successors, nor by having his title founded upon any lineal descent; but as acting in his office, without depending on, or attachment to, any particular family."—*Sykes*. See note on ver. 6.

11. *Of whom we have many things to say.* What the apostle does say of Melchisedec is recorded in ch. vii. Some prefer to translate, "of which matter," that is, the priesthood of Christ. ¶ *And hard to be uttered.* Rather, hard to be made plain to you, or hard to be comprehended or understood, as is manifest from what follows. The obtuseness of his hearers did not affect the apostle's power of speech, but did interfere with his being understood. ¶ *Dull of hearing.* Slow of apprehension; not readily discerning spiritual truth.

12. *For when for the time, &c.* Considering the length of time since you became Christians, you ought to understand the great principles of revealed truth so as to be able to teach others; instead of which you are so ignorant that you have need that others should repeat the instructions which you formerly received. ¶ *Of the oracles of God.* Of revealed truth. See note on Rom. iii. 2. ¶ *And are become such as have need of milk, &c.* "When they are

the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

said to be such as had need of milk, and not of strong meat, it can hardly be thought that he meant that they had no need of, or occasion for, strong meat; but only that through their weakness and unpreparedness they had no inclination or appetite to it; they did not crave it or make use of it." — *Peirce*. They were losing their hold of the great truths they had formerly embraced, and were verging towards that apostasy from the faith, from which it was one great object of this epistle to dissuade them. *Milk* and *strong meat* are figurative expressions here, denoting the most simple elements and the most grand and abstruse problems of divine truth.

13. *Unskilful in the word of righteousness*. Inexperienced in regard to that righteousness which is of the highest moment. Paul recognizes a distinction between legal righteousness and the righteousness of God, or of faith, in Rom. x. 3-13. See note on Rom. i. 17. The latter seems to be here intended. "It seems to me that the word of righteousness in the place before us is the same with the righteousness of faith, or the word of faith, and that his reproof is of this nature: you Hebrews are very fond of the ceremonial injunctions of the law of Moses, which are mean things when compared with the way of becoming righteous by faith, which that law recommends, and as much inferior to it as a low milk diet is to that of stronger food; and while you relish only the former, you show yourselves inexperienced and little acquainted with the latter, which is much more excellent and noble. Hereby you degrade and unman your-

## CHAPTER VI.

**T**HEREFORE leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and

selves, as though you were babes and infants, whose proper food milk is." — *Peirce*.

14. *Strong meat*. Solid food; figuratively, the more important doctrines of Christianity. ¶ *Of full age*. Mature; not children, but adults, arrived at years of discretion. ¶ *Who by reason of use*. Or, "of a habit, or perfection," as in the margin. "Through custom." — *Tyndale*. "Through habit." — *Conybeare*. ¶ *Have their senses exercised*. The word *senses* refers here not so much to the bodily senses of hearing, seeing, and the like, as to the mental faculties and spiritual perceptions. ¶ *To discern both good and evil*. To distinguish between the profitable and unprofitable, between truth and falsehood; to accept the truth revealed by God, and to reject and repudiate the traditions of men.

## CHAPTER VI.

1. *The principles of the doctrine of Christ*. Or, "the word of the beginning of Christ," as in the margin. The rudiments or the elements of Christianity. See note on ch. v. 12: ¶ *Let us go on to perfection*. That is, to a knowledge of the more profound and abstruse doctrines of Christianity. See notes on 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2; ch. v. 12-14. ¶ *Not laying again the foundation*. Or, the first principles, as in the former part of the verse. These first principles, or rudiments, to the number of six, are enumerated in this and the following verse. ¶ *Repentance from dead works*. "From works that cause death or condemnation, or that have no vitality or life. The reference may be either to those actions which were

of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

sinful in their nature, or to those which related to the forms of religion, where there was no spiritual life." — *Barnes*.

¶ *And of faith toward God.* Faith in God is as imperatively demanded as repentance from sin, to qualify any one for the heavenly kingdom. Faith and repentance are two of the rudiments or first principles of Christianity.

2. *Of the doctrines of baptisms.* The Jews had a multitude of baptisms, or washings of the hands, of cups, of pots, of brazen vessels, and the like. See note on Mark vii. 4. Only two baptisms are recognized by Christianity, namely, of water, and of the Holy Spirit. See note on Matt. iii. 11.

¶ *And of the laying on of hands.* "Namely, what was the use and purport of this practice. For anciently they were wont to *lay on hands* as soon as the persons were baptized, Acts viii. 17; xix. 5, 6, to give them the Holy Ghost. Sometimes they used this ceremony to appoint persons to offices, Acts vi. 6; xiii. 3; sometimes, to heal, as Acts ix. 12, 17. This custom then being so variously applied to such different purposes, it was explained to the person to be initiated by baptism." — *Sykes*.

¶ *And of resurrection of the dead.* Some understand this figuratively, as indicating deliverance from bondage or deep distress, or awakening from a state of spiritual stupidity, or a renewal to life of those who were dead in trespasses and sins. I prefer the more literal interpretation. Paul certainly regarded the resurrection of the dead as one of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Notwithstanding it was denied by the Sadducees and ridiculed by the heathen philosophers, "he preached Jesus and the resurrection." Acts xvii. 18. See also Acts xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15, 21; xxvi. 8; and especially his luminous testimony in 1 Cor. xv. ¶ *And of eternal judgment.* This is named as the sixth element or "principle of the doctrine of Christ." Some understand this to refer to a judgment subsequent to the resurrection of the dead, involving the

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

endless happiness of some, and the endless misery of others. But such is by no means a necessary conclusion. The passage is susceptible of a very different interpretation. For example: "The common interpretation makes this refer to the final judgment. I do not find that ever the final judgment has this epithet given to it. Nor is that judgment ever, that I remember, said to be eternal. I think, therefore, that the words are to be understood in a very different manner, and κρίμα here seems to me to be put for temporal judgments. Thus the word is used, 1 Pet. iv. 17, 'The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God,' where the context will not suffer us to take it in any other sense. Compare ver. 16, 18, 19. So again, 1 Cor. xi. 29, 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.' What this judgment was, appears by the next verse: 'For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.' See also ver. 34. The word αἰώνιος, which we have rendered *eternal*, I take to respect not the time to come, but the time past, and to signify *ancient*, or *past long ago*. That the word is thus used without any respect to eternity, we may see, Rom. xvi. 25; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2. See also these places in the LXX.: Ps. lxxvii. 5; Prov. xxii. 28; Jer. xviii. 15; Ezek. xxxvi. 2. According to this account of the words, we may consider the Jewish religion as established by the ancient and tremendous judgments, of the execution of which the books of Moses give an account; such as the deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and more especially the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, and perhaps the judgments of God upon the Israelites in the wilderness, for their impetuosity and unbelief." — *Pearce*.

3. *And this we will do, if God permit.* We will leave these rudimental principles, and proceed to the consid-

4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly

gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have tasted the good

eration of the more profound and abstruse doctrines of Christianity, if God grant us strength and opportunity to do so. See James iv. 13-15.

4. For it is impossible, &c. The apostle here assigns a reason why he will not "teach again,—the first principles of the oracles of God," ch. v. 12; namely, that if any who had once received instruction apostatized from Christianity, it would be useless to attempt to reclaim them by a repetition of the same instruction. "The impossibility, which he speaks of, has reference (it should be observed) only to human agents; it is only said that all human means of acting on the heart have been exhausted in such a case. Of course no limit is placed on the divine power." — *Conybeare*. "The apostle does not mean, that it is impossible for God to renew a second time, by repentance, an apostate; but that it is impossible for the ministers of Christ to convert a second time to the faith of the gospel one who, after being made acquainted with all the proofs by which God had thought fit to establish Christ's mission, shall allow himself to think him an impostor, and renounce his gospel. The apostle, knowing this, was anxious to give the Hebrews just views of the ancient oracles, in the hope that it would prevent them from apostatizing." — *Macknight*. See note on Matt. xix. 26. It is not certain, however, that absolute impossibility is affirmed of the success of human exertions to reclaim apostates. "Many believe that impossible is here used simply for difficult." — *Calmet*. "Ἀδύνατον, in this place, does not mean absolutely impossible, but rather a thing so difficult, that it may be almost impossible." — *Rosenmüller*. Compare Luke xvi. 31. ¶ Once enlightened. Such as have been brought out of darkness into light; whose minds have been illuminated by the light of the gospel. ¶ And have tasted of the heavenly gift. "The gift of God, says St. Paul, Rom. vi. 23, is

eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. And in order to that, remission of our past sins is granted to us by God δωρεάν, gratis, Rom. iii. 24. To taste this gift is to perceive, to be sensible of, the truth of such gift of God. To be convinced of life eternal through Christ, is one of the strongest motives that can be urged to make any one hold fast his profession." — *Sykes*. ¶ And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. "Partakers of the influences of the Holy Ghost: for it is only in this sense that we can partake of the Holy Spirit." — *Barnes*.

5. And have tasted the good word of God. Have perceived or experienced the excellency of divine truth; have attained present salvation by coming to a knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. ii. 4; have felt the sanctifying influence of the truth, John xvii. 17. ¶ And the powers of the world to come. "Or, of the coming age. 'The age to come' was a phrase in common use among the Hebrews, to denote the future dispensation, the times of the Messiah. The same idea was expressed by the phrases 'the last times,' 'the end of the world,' &c., which are of so frequent occurrence in the Scriptures. They all denoted an age which was to succeed the old dispensation; the time of the Messiah; or the period in which the affairs of the world would be wound up. Here it evidently refers to that period, and the meaning is, that they had participated in the peculiar blessings to be expected in that dispensation, to wit, in the clear views of the way of salvation, and the influences of the Holy Spirit on the soul. The word 'powers' here implies that in that time there would be some extraordinary manifestation of the power of God. An unusual energy would be put forth to save men, particularly as evinced by the agency of the Holy Spirit on the heart. Of this power the apostle here says they of whom he spake had partaken." — *Barnes*. Others suppose the miraculous powers

word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drink-

exercised by some of the primitive Christians are intended: "He means the powerful or miraculous works of the Christian age: 'God bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost,' ch. ii. 4. The 'world to come,' or, rather, the age to come, signified the age of the Messiah, which was to last to the final consummation of all things."—*Sykes*. "They who not only saw those great miracles whereby Christianity was confirmed, but were themselves empowered to work them, could not desire fuller evidence of the truth of it."—*Peirce*. "The powers of the world to come appear to denote the miraculous operations of the spiritual gifts. They properly belonged to the αἰὼν μέλλων."—*Conybeare*.

6. *If they shall fall away.* If they shall renounce Christianity, or apostatize from the faith. One great object of this epistle is to dissuade the Hebrews from apostasy, to which they were tempted by the persecutions which they endured. The apostle does not here assert that any had thus apostatized; but he endeavors to prevent any such catastrophe by exhibiting its sad results. ¶ *To renew them again unto repentance.* It is implied that they had once already repented, and had been converted to Christianity. This must be taken in connection with ver. 4. The meaning of the whole sentence may be briefly expressed thus: It is impossible, or exceedingly difficult, to renew again to repentance those who were once Christians and partakers of the fruits of Christianity, if they apostatize; human efforts give no promise of success; the only hope is in God, with whom all things are

eth in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned.

possible. ¶ *Seeing they crucify to themselves, &c.* "By turning apostates they represent Christ as an impostor, and consequently his crucifixion as just; and thereby, put him afresh to shame."—*Bloomfield*. "Their apostasy and rejection of the Saviour would be like holding him up publicly as deserving the infamy and ignominy of the cross."—*Barnes*.

7, 8. *For the earth, &c.* See note on Luke xiii. 6-9, where a similar doctrine is taught in the parable of the unfruitful fig-tree. The application of the figure here is manifest; it exhibits the effects of growth in grace and knowledge, under Christian instruction and influences, on the one hand, and unfruitfulness and apostasy, on the other. If the earth, moistened by the rain, brings forth and buds, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, Isa. lv. 10, it "receiveth blessing from God;" and, in like manner, he who believes the divine testimony and remains steadfast in his loyalty to the truth is "blessed in his deed." James i. 25. On the contrary, land which is unfruitful, bearing only "thorns and briers, is rejected" by the husbandman, as wholly unremunerative; so, also, there is no encouragement to "teach again the first principles of the oracles of God," ch. v. 12, to those who have already been taught, and have afterwards apostatized. ¶ *Nigh unto cursing, &c.* Unproductive land is sometimes burned, that the noxious roots and seeds may be destroyed; and by this figure the apostle intimates that a sharp discipline awaits apostates. "It is acknowledged, almost on all hands, that this epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. This verse is,

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For God is not unrighteous

to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

in my opinion, a proof of it; and here I suppose the apostle refers to that approaching destruction; and perhaps he has this all along in view, but speaks of it covertly, that he might not give offence. There is a good sense in which all these things may be applied to the Jews at large, who were favored by our Lord's ministry and miracles. — Their state, which had received much moral cultivation from Moses, the prophets, Christ and his apostles, and now bore nothing but the most vicious fruits, pride, unbelief, hardness of heart, contempt of God's word and ordinances, blasphemy, and rebellion, was *rejected*, reprobated of God; was *nigh unto cursing*, about to be cast off from the divine protection; and their city and temple were shortly to be *burnt up* by the Roman armies. Thus the apostle, under the case of *individuals*, points out the destruction that was to come upon this people *in general*, and which actually took place about seven years after the writing of this epistle. And this appears to be the very subject which the apostle has in view in the parallel solemn passages, ch. x. 26-31; and, viewed in this light, much of their obscurity and difficulty vanishes away."

— *Clarke*. To the same effect, and more briefly, is the following: "The apostle is supposed, in this analogy, to refer to the great spiritual advantages enjoyed by the Jews, and to foretell, as a punishment of their abuse of them, and their apostasy, the approaching destruction of their city and temple, which took place about seven years after; they were therefore '*nigh unto cursing*.'" — *Townsend*.

9. *And things that accompany salvation*. Namely, from the calamity indicated in the phrase "*nigh unto cursing*," ver. 8. Preservation from the destruction which overwhelmed Jerusalem and the Jewish people, is often styled *salvation* by our Lord himself. See notes

on Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13. "Several of your brethren have already apostatized; and the whole nation is in a state of rebellion against God, and, in consequence of their final rejection of Christ and his gospel, are about to be finally rejected by God. They must meet with destruction; they have the things that are suitable to, and indicative of, a state of reprobation; the wrath of God will come upon them to the uttermost; but while they meet with destruction, you shall meet with salvation. It is worthy of remark, that no genuine Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem; they all, previous to the siege by Titus, escaped to Pella, in Coelosyria; and it is remarkable that not one Jew escaped. All either fell by the sword, or perished by famine, or were led into captivity. According to their own imprecation, 'His blood be upon us and our children,' God visited and avenged the innocent blood of Christ upon them, and upon their posterity; and they continue to be monuments of his displeasure to the present day." — *Clarke*. It is not unlikely that, with this deliverance from the overwhelming destruction which befell the unbelieving and the apostates, there is also included the idea of that present salvation from the power of sin and from the fear of death, which is enjoyed by those who trust in the living God and confide in his promises. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

10. *For God is not unrighteous to forget*, &c. God will deal justly with all men. He "will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. ii. 6. Just as surely as he will render a just recompense of reward for every transgression and disobedience, ch. ii. 2, just so surely will he adequately reward every one who obeys and honors him by ministering to the necessities of his children. "The meaning here is, that by their kindness in min-

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

istering to the wants of the saints, they had given full evidence of true piety. If God should forget that, it would be 'unrighteous,' (1.) because there was a propriety that it should be remembered; and (2.) because it is expressly promised that it shall not fail of reward. Matt. x. 42."—*Barnes*.

11. *And we desire, &c.* One of the principal encouragements to perseverance is unwavering confidence in the immutability of the divine purpose, ver. 17; and the apostle labors to inspire such confidence by exhibiting the impossibility that God's promise should fail of accomplishment. ¶ *Full assurance of hope.* Hope is a compound emotion, in which are combined a desire for some good, and a corresponding expectation of receiving it. See note on Rom. xv. 13. The apostle shows his brethren, as an inducement to perseverance in faith, that they have abundant reason to expect, as well as to desire, the blessings of the gospel; in other words, that they may safely confide in the divine veracity, and exercise full assurance of hope *unto the end*; "that is, to the uttermost, to the fullest extent."—*Bloomfield*.

12. *That ye be not slothful.* "That is, negligent and careless to grow in faith, and to bring forth the fruits thereof."—*Assemb. Annot.* ¶ *But followers of them, &c.* Imitators of them who believed God and enjoyed salvation. John v. 24; Rom. iv. 3. See note on 1 Tim. iv. 10.

13. *For when God made promise to Abraham.* See Gen. xxii. 16–18. "The object of introducing this example here is to encourage those to whom the apostle was writing to persevere in the Christian life. This

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had pa-

he does by showing that God had given the highest possible assurance of his purpose to bless his people, by an oath. Reference is made to Abraham in this argument, probably, for two reasons. (1.) To show the nature of the evidence which Christians have that they will be saved, or the ground of encouragement, being the same as that made to Abraham, and depending, as in his case, on the promise of God; and (2.) because the example of Abraham was just in point. He had persevered. He had relied firmly and solely on the promise of God. He did this when appearances were much against the fulfilment of the promise, and he thus showed the advantage of perseverance and fidelity in the cause of God."

—*Barnes*. ¶ *Because he could swear by none greater.* Men invoke a superior power to sanction an oath; but God has no superior. In pledging his own veracity, therefore, he gave the highest possible sanction to his promise. ¶ *He sware by himself.* "That is, pledged his eternal Godhead to fulfil his engagement. So God is said, Jer. xxii. 5, and elsewhere in the Old Testament, to swear by himself, as having none superior to swear by."—*Bloomfield*. In this case the form is, "By myself have I sworn;" elsewhere we find the formula, "As I live, saith the Lord God." Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

14. *Surely blessing I will bless thee.* I will certainly bless thee. ¶ *Multiplying I will multiply thee.* I will greatly increase thy posterity. Only a part of the promise is here mentioned, being that in which Abraham had a more direct personal interest. See note on ver. 17.

15. *After he had patiently endured*



tiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for

confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto

*he obtained the promise.* This promise is recorded Gen. xii. 1-3, and again, with the confirmation of an oath, Gen. xxii. 16-18. It required great faith to believe this promise, when it was originally made. Humanly speaking, its fulfilment seemed in the highest degree improbable. Yet Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." See notes on Rom. iv. 17-22. And when he was subsequently required to perform an act which appeared to be fatal to the fulfilment of the promise, he still confided in God that in his own way he would bestow the promised blessing, ch. xi. 17-19; and then the promise was confirmed in a manner "in which it was impossible for God to lie," ver. 18. See Gen. xxii. 1-19. It was many years after the promise was given before Abraham could see any posterity from Isaac, in whom his seed was called, ch. xi. 18; but he "patiently endured," and at length "obtained the promise," not only in abundant personal prosperity, but by beholding the commencement of its fulfilment in regard to a numerous posterity. "By mentioning this, our author not only suggested to the Hebrews an example which they were most likely to regard, but implied, too, that the like patient enduring is expected from his seed in order to their obtaining the other part of the promise, the blessing that belonged to them." — *Peirce*.

16. *For men verily swear by the greater.* Men invoke a superior power, to sanction their oaths. God could not do this; but he has done what is at least equivalent, by appealing to his own veracity. ¶ *An end of all strife.* It is "the highest pledge of fidelity which a man can give." — *Stuart*. Unless it be impeached, an oath is regarded as a sufficient "confirmation" of testimony

concerning past events, or promises concerning the future.

17. *Wherein.* Rather, *wherefore*. "On account of which, that is, because an oath removes all dispute or doubt." — *Stuart*. "On account of which; or since an oath had this effect, God was willing to appeal to it, in order to assure his people of salvation." — *Barnes*. ¶ *The heirs of promise.* By *the promise* here the apostle refers to what he omitted in ver. 14, namely, the blessing of all men in the seed of Abraham; and the idea is, that the heirs of this blessing have the same reason to confide in the divine promise which Abraham had, because, in regard to all the particulars embraced in the promise, the oath of God is solemnly pledged. The terms in which the promise is expressed are sufficiently comprehensive to embrace the whole human family. When first given to Abraham, *πάσαι αι φυλαι*, *all the families* of the earth, expressed the number of persons who were made "heirs of promise," Gen. xii. 3; when it was renewed, and confirmed by an oath, Gen. xxii. 18, we have the equivalent phrase, *πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, *all the nations* of the earth; and when the apostle, addressing such unpromising subjects as the Jews, who had "denied the Holy One and the Just," and clamored for his crucifixion, assured them, as an incentive to repentance, that they were heirs or children of the promise, Acts iii. 14, 19, 25, he uses yet another form to express the same idea, *πάσαι αι πατραι*, *all the kindreds* of the earth. Thus extensive is the promise. And the blessing promised is worthy of its author; it is described by Paul as *justification through faith*, and by Peter as the turning of men away from their iniquities; precisely that *salvation from sin* which our blessed Lord came to accomplish. See notes on Matt. i. 21; Acts iii. 26; Gal. iii. 8. ¶ *The*

the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath :

18 That by two immutable things, in which *it was impossi-*

ble for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us :

19 Which *hope* we have as an

*immutability of his counsel.* "His fixed purpose. He meant to show in the most solemn manner that his purpose would not change. The plans of God never change; and all the hope which we can have of heaven is founded on the fact that his purpose is immutable." — *Barnes.* See Gal. iii. 14-17; Eph. i. 9, 10; iii. 8-12; Col. i. 25-29; James i. 17. ¶ *Confirmed it by an oath.* "Interposed by an oath. *μεσίτεω* means, according to classical usage, to act the part of a mediator, to be an internuntius, conciliator, between two parties. But here, this sense is impossible. God is not a mediator between himself and the heirs of the promise. The sense of interposing then becomes a necessary one. So the Vulgate, *interposuit iusjurandum.* He made a *μεσίτην* (so to speak) by an oath, interposed an oath between himself and the heirs of promise, that is, he made an oath the means of removing all doubt or question on their part, whether he would faithfully perform what he had promised." — *Stuart.*

18. *That by two immutable things.* Some commentators suppose that by the "two immutable things" the apostle meant two distinct promises, namely, that which was made to Abraham, and that by which the Messiah was constituted a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. But, in my judgment, the common interpretation is more natural and more correct; namely, that the promise and the oath of God are the two things here styled immutable. If it be objected that the word of God is entitled to full credit without an oath, it may be answered that the apostle represents the oath as superadded to evidence already sufficient, and as the fruit of abundant divine grace. Moreover, the oath was given for the purpose of inducing men to confide unwaveringly in the divine

promise, by convincing them that God's "counsel" is immutable. God would not swear by himself, if he were not in earnest. If it were possible to disregard his word, it would seem that his oath must give full satisfaction to all, and make an end of all doubt and misgiving. ¶ *In which it was impossible for God to lie.* "That is, it would be contrary to his nature; it is not for a moment to be supposed. Compare Tit. i. 2. The meaning here is, that such was the love of God for truth, such his holiness of character, that he could not speak falsely." — *Barnes.* ¶ *That we might have a strong consolation.* Whoso confides in God has a consolation, a support, a source of rejoicing, which nothing can disturb. Self-confidence is unstable, and unworthy of reliance. Nothing but a firm reliance on the unchangeable goodness of God can yield constant support and consolation. To this source of confidence the apostle directed the attention of those who were in danger of apostasy through persecution. He would have them consider that if God has graciously secured their endless spiritual welfare, he may be safely trusted for protection in all the vicissitudes of this mortal life. To the same purpose Paul exhorts his brethren to endure persecution, Rom. viii. 32. Thus may we all trust in God. ¶ *Who have fled for refuge.* For protection against danger, whether resulting from our own sinfulness, or from the evil intentions of adversaries. ¶ *To lay hold on the hope set before us.* "Hope here means the objects of hope. The object of hope, namely, future happiness and glory, deliverance from sin and sorrow, is set before all Christians, who are seeking a refuge from their guilt and miseries. And the oath of God assures them that such a refuge is to be found, and also affords a powerful excitement to seek it." —

anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even Jesus*, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

*Stuart.* Whoso finds this refuge will bear the persecution of adversaries with a patient and firm spirit, and will not be driven into apostasy by the temporary inconveniences attending steadfastness in the faith.

19. *An anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.* While the anchor holds fast, the vessel remains in safety, though the wind be furious. So the Christian enjoys peace in the midst of tribulation, while his hope remains unshaken. This is suggested by the apostle as a dissuasive against apostasy. In like manner, our Lord exhorted his disciples to "possess their souls in patience," in the midst of the awful dangers and destruction then near at hand, trusting in God, who was able to prevent them from suffering the slightest harm. Luke xxi. 5-33. Hope is so frequently compared with an anchor, that the one has become the universally recognized emblem of the other. "The sentiment of the writer is then as follows: hold fast the objects of your Christian hope. These will keep you steady in adherence to your holy religion, and preserve you, like an anchor, from making shipwreck of the faith."—*Stuart.* ¶ *Which entereth into that within the vail.* This is an allusion to the Holy of Holies, which contained the mercy-seat and the ark of the covenant, and which was concealed by a vail from public view. Into this holy place the high priest entered once a year.

20. *Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.* He hath entered into heaven, of which the Holy of Holies in the earthly temple of God was only a faint emblem, to prepare a place for his people, so that they may forever dwell with him. See notes on John xiv. 1-3. "Having such a friend and advocate there, we should be firm

## CHAPTER VII.

FOR this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

in the hope of eternal life, and amidst the storms and tempests around us we should be calm."—*Barnes.* ¶ *A high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.* "To illustrate this fact was the object for which this discussion was introduced, and which had been interrupted by the remarks occurring in this chapter on the danger of apostasy. Having warned them of this danger, and exhorted them to go on to make the highest attainments possible in the divine life, the apostle resumes the discussion concerning Melchisedec, and makes the remarks which he intended to make respecting this remarkable man. See ch. v. 11."—*Barnes.*

## CHAPTER VII.

1. *King of Salem.* "Which is, King of Peace." Ver. 2. It is generally supposed, however, that Salem, which means *peace*, is here used as the name of a place, namely, Jerusalem. ¶ *Priest of the most high God.* "In calling Melchisedec a priest of the most high God, the Scripture designs to exhibit him as a true priest of the true God, who is maker and Lord of heaven and earth. Gen. xiv. 19, 22."—*Stuart.* ¶ *Who met Abraham returning, &c.* Gen. xiv. 18. ¶ *And blessed him.* Gen. xiv. 19, 20. Many fanciful ideas have been entertained concerning "this Melchisedec." By different persons he has been supposed to be the Holy Spirit; the Son of God; an emanation from God; an angel; a man created before Adam; Enoch, the seventh from Adam, returned to the earth; Shem, the son of Noah; Job; and perhaps others. The most reasonable interpretation seems to be, that "Melchisedec was a righteous and peaceful king, a worshipper and priest of the most high God, in the land of Canaan,

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days,

a friend of Abraham, and of a rank elevated above him. This last opinion lies upon the face of the sacred record, in Gen. xiv. and in Heb. vii; and it is the only one which can be defended on any tolerable grounds of interpretation." — *Stuart*.

2. *To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all.* "He gave him tithes of all." Gen. xiv. 20. This is represented as given to Melchisedec as a priest, rather than as a king; and to have been designed, not as a tribute to an earthly potentate, but as an acknowledgment of dependence on God, and of gratitude for blessings received. From the two facts, that Melchisedec blessed Abraham and received tithes of him, the apostle argues his superior dignity, ver. 6–10, and equally the superior dignity of Christ, who was made a high priest after the same order. ¶ *First being by interpretation King of righteousness.* "This is the meaning of his name, Melchisedec. It was agreeable to the Hebrews thus to take notice of the signification of names. Thus Josephus says that Melchisedec signifies a righteous king, as he certainly was, and therefore honored to be the priest of the most high God." — *Peirce*. ¶ *King of peace.* "A literal translation of the appellation, 'King of Salem,' ver. 1. The idea of Paul is, that it was worthy of remark that the appellation which he bore was appropriate to one whose ministry it was said the priesthood of the Messiah would resemble." — *Barnes*.

3. *Without father, without mother, without descent.* Of course, this is not to be understood literally, that any mere man, since Adam, was absolutely without father, or mother, or descent. The meaning is simply, that his gen-

nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive

ealogy is not recorded in the tables kept for that purpose; or perhaps, as some suppose, that his rightful succession to the priesthood, as the successor of any other incumbent, does not appear of record. ¶ *Having neither beginning of days nor end of life.* Whose birth and death are not recorded; or rather, perhaps, that his accession to the priesthood and the end of his ministry are not known. ¶ *Made like unto the Son of God.* Although this language seems to imply that it was the divine intention to cause this ancient priest and king to resemble Christ; yet the intention of the writer manifestly is to show that Christ was constituted in some respects after the similitude of Melchisedec. ¶ *Abideth a priest continually.* That is, so far as the records show. There is no account of his death, nor of the expiration of his priesthood.

4. *Now consider how great this man was.* The object of the writer was to exalt the character of this ancient "priest of the most high God," as in so doing he equally exalted the character of Christ. The Jews venerated Abraham. If they could be convinced that Melchisedec was superior to him, then they would be compelled to admit that the descendants of Abraham, who were priests, were inferior to Christ, who was a priest "after the order of Melchisedec." ¶ *Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth, &c.* This was an acknowledgment of inferiority, on the part of Abraham, ver. 6, 7, where, as in Gen. xiv. 19, 20, the acceptance of the tithes and the bestowment of the blessing are joined together; and unquestionably, "the less is blessed of the better."

5. *They that are of the sons of Levi,*

the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham :

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

&c. "The meaning of this verse is, that the Levitical priests had a right to receive tithes of their brethren, but still that they were inferior to Melchisedec. The apostle admits that their superiority to the rest of the people was shown by the fact that they had a right to require of them the tenth part of the productions of the land for their maintenance, and for the support of religion. But still he says that their inferiority to Melchisedec, and consequently to Christ, as a priest, was shown by the fact that the illustrious ancestor of all the Jewish people, including the priests as well as others, had confessed his inferiority to Melchisedec by paying him tithes." — *Barnes*.

6. *Whose descent is not counted from them, &c.* "A periphrasis by which Melchisedec is described, and at the same time additional intimation is given, that he was of an order of priests different from that of the Levites." — *Stuart*. ¶ *And blessed him that had the promises.* Abraham had received the promise, Gen. xii. 1-3, which was of such vital importance that an oath was afterwards added for confirmation, Gen. xxii. 16-18 ; ch. vi. 13-20, before he paid tithes to Melchisedec and received his blessing, Gen. xiv. 18-20. He therefore fully represented the heirs of promise, even those who attained the priesthood, when he thus acknowledged the superiority of Melchisedec. Ver. 9, 10.

7. *And without all contradiction.* It is universally admitted. ¶ *The less is blessed of the better.* "The inferior was blessed by the superior." — *Stuart*. The reference is not to moral character, or even to intellectual strength ;

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes ; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham.

but to official rank or station. The apostle assumes it as an undeniable fact, that Abraham, by paying tithes, acknowledged the superior rank of Melchisedec.

8. *And here men that die receive tithes, &c.* "And here, tithes are received by men that die ; but there, by him of whom it is testified that he liveth ; namely, testified in Ps. cx. 4, 'Thou art a priest forever.'" — *Conybeare*. Diverse interpretations of this passage have been given by different commentators. Perhaps the following, by an ancient writer, expresses the idea as accurately as any other : "And in the Levitical law, they that receive tithes die, succeed, and are succeeded ; their succession of one after the death of another is recorded in the Scripture, and so their death punctually set down ; but in that place of Genesis, Melchisedec hath no other mention made of him, but that he liveth, no kind of mention of his death." — *Hammond*. Perpetuity implies superiority over that which is temporary and fleeting.

9, 10. *And as I may so say, &c.* "So again, if you compare it, you shall find that Levi also, who under the law hath the privilege of receiving all the tithes, did, in Abraham's person (as the sons are included in the parent), pay tithes to Melchisedec ; which shows again the dignity of that priesthood above the Levitical. For Levi was in the loins of his great-grandfather Abraham, and as it were included in him, and so may be said in some sense to have done what he did, and paid what he paid." — *Hammond*. "Since Abraham was deemed, by his posterity, to be the patriarch and

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

head of all his descendants, in such a sense as to hold a pre-eminence in rank above them, a proof that he acknowledged his inferiority to Melchisedec, by paying tithes to him, was a proof that his descendants must of course be inferior to Melchisedec. The statement in ver. 9 and 10 is built upon the Oriental modes of estimating descent and rank. Since Levi, who was of the posterity of Abraham, might be reckoned as then virtually in the patriarch, and since he descended from him, and therefore could not be regarded as of a rank above him, it would follow, according to the Jewish mode of reasoning, that the priesthood of Melchisedec was of a rank superior to that of Levi. — If the reader wants confirmation, in regard to the statement above made, of the Jewish views respecting the *precedency* of Abraham, let him peruse Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 52–58; Luke xvi. 22–25.” — Stuart.

11. *If therefore perfection, &c.* Another argument in proof that the priesthood of Christ was superior to that of Aaron and his descendants is here suggested; namely, that the law of which the Levites were priests “made nothing perfect,” ver. 19, but was succeeded by “a better covenant, which was established upon better promises,” ch. viii. 6. “If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood,” there could be no need of a change; but the Scriptures declare that a change shall be made, ver. 18, 19; and both the law and the priesthood must be regarded as superior to the former. A change in the law required a corresponding change in the priest-

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

hood as imperatively as a change in the priesthood required a corresponding change in the law, ver. 12. The law and its appropriate priesthood were regarded as mutually dependent, as parts of the same system.

12. *There is made of necessity a change also of the law.* This has been interpreted by some as merely a change of the law confining the priesthood to the tribe of Levi, so that the predicted priest might be taken from another tribe. That this idea is included is manifest from ver. 13, 14; but a far more important and radical change is indicated in ver. 15–19; ch. viii. 6–13. The first was a covenant of works; the second was a covenant of grace. See note on Rom. i. 17.

13, 14. *For he of whom these things are spoken, &c.* “About the fact that the Lord Jesus was of the tribe of Judah, there could be no doubt. Compare Matt. i. 3. But probably the apostle means here to refer to more than that simple fact. It was a doctrine of the Old Testament, and was admitted by the Jews, that the Messiah was to be of that tribe. See Gen. xlix. 10; Isa. xi. 1; Micah v. 2; Matt. ii. 6. This was an additional consideration to show that there was to be a change of some kind in the office of the priesthood, since it was declared, Ps. cx., that the Messiah was to be a priest. The fact that the Messiah is to be of the tribe of Judah is still admitted by the Jews.” — Barnes. It must not be forgotten, that the apostle is not here addressing unbelieving Jews, who would require proof that Jesus was the true Messiah, but those who had already been con-

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

verted to Christianity, yet, through the influence of seductive arts on the one hand and persecution on the other, were in danger of apostasy. To confirm this faith, and to encourage them to a steadfast adherence to the cause of Christ, he calls attention to the evidence of their Master's superiority over the Jewish priests, and the superiority of his gospel over the Levitical law; and he enforces the consideration that, by apostasy, they would surrender what was more valuable than they could hope to obtain. See note at the beginning of ch. v.

15. *And it is yet far more evident, &c.* "And this is still more evident, if another priest ariseth according to the similitude of Melchisedec." — *Sykes*. "A strong proof of the necessity of such a change of the priesthood was furnished from the fact that the Messiah was to be of the tribe of Judah; but a much stronger, because as a priest he was to be of the order of Melchisedec; that is, he was of the same rank with one who did not even belong to that tribe." — *Barnes*.

16. *Who is made.* Who is constituted a priest. ¶ *After the law of a carnal commandment, &c.* "The sense of the verse is this: Who (namely, Christ) was not made such (that is, a high priest) by a law of fleshly commandment, — like the Mosaic, which was so, inasmuch as its ordinances were frail, looked no further than this life, and therefore temporary, and to be abrogated, Eph. ii. 15, — but through the power of endless life, that is, both as Son of God, and also as involved in the promise and oath of God, 'Thou art a priest forever,' &c. — By the expression *σαρκικῆς* the apostle may also have meant to suggest the inferiority of the old law in respect of

17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 For the law made nothing

its carnality; and to intimate that the exalted excellence of the new high priest demanded a corresponding excellence in the law, namely, by passing from a carnal to a spiritual service." — *Bloomfield*.

17. *For he testifieth, &c.* Namely in Ps. cx., a passage admitted by the Jews generally to have reference to the Messiah.

18. *There is verily a disannulling.* A setting aside, as of no further force or authority. ¶ *For the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.* The character of the weakness and unprofitableness of the old law is suggested in ver. 19. See note on Rom. viii. 3.

19. *For the law made nothing perfect, &c.* "When the apostle speaks of the law as weak, carnal, unprofitable, not making any one perfect, he considers it as what it was, instituted for temporal purposes; and consequently as unfit and unable to obtain the ends which the Jews expected from it. They expected to be justified by God, or to be treated as righteous from their observance of the law. No, says the apostle, the law did not propose to make the observers of it perfect, or completely happy. It was weak, and carnal, for it stood in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal observances, imposed only until the time of reformation; and therefore it could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Ch. ix. 9, 10. The law was not able to effect what it was not designed for; and therefore the Hebrews ought to recur to Christ, and to his law, which was designed to bring men to perfection. The bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh to God, did make perfect, or did that which the law did not. When the

perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made priest*:

21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a

priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this *man*, because he

law promised temporal happiness, the Jews had sufficient ground to expect those good things which were proposed. But when Christ came and promised from God remission of sins, and eternal life, we had a *better hope* raised, even such a one as gave us access to God." — *Sykes*.

20. *Inasmuch as not without an oath, &c.* The evidence that the priesthood was assigned to the Messiah under the solemnity of an oath is quoted in ver. 21.

21. *For those priests, &c.* Namely, the priests who were inducted into office under the provisions of the Levitical law. ¶ *The Lord sware, &c.* Ps. cx. 4. The priests under the law entered upon their office "without an oath;" that is, there is no evidence that God had assigned them to that position by oath; but he had sworn to constitute his Son a priest after the order of Melchisedec.

22. *By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.* Rather, *better covenant*. The comparison commenced in ver. 20 is here completed, ver. 21 being interposed parenthetically. "It is difficult, if not impossible, to give the exact features of the original here, in any copy. The argument of the writer stands thus: The gospel is a better source of hope; for as much as the appointment of a priest by an oath exceeds in solemnity and importance an arrangement to take the office merely by descent, so much does the new covenant, of which Jesus is the sponsor, exceed the old." — *Stuart*. By styling the new covenant *better* than the old, the apostle means much more than that it is more permanent. "The former covenant was

that which God made with his people under the Mosaic dispensation; the new covenant is that made by means of Christ. This is *better*, because (1.) the terms are more simple and easy; (2.) the observances and rites are much less onerous and hard; (3.) it relates to all men, not being confined to the Jewish people; (4.) it is now sure. The former was administered through the instrumentality of the Levitical priesthood, this by the Son of God; that was transitory and changing, this is permanent and eternal." — *Barnes*. But this definition falls far short of the full import of the text. In ch. viii. the apostle indicates other particulars of the utmost importance, in which the new covenant is *better* than the old. See note on ch. viii. 6.

23, 24. *And they truly were many priests, &c.* "The writer now proceeds to add one more reason why the Levitical priesthood must be considered as far inferior to that of Jesus. As men in a frail and dying state are constituted priests under the Levitical law, the consequence is, that the priesthood is liable to continual change, and must necessarily pass from the hands of one to another in a short time. Not so in the case of Christ; who, being exalted above the heavens, and constituted high priest in the temple not made with hands, hath an immutable priesthood, subject to no succession." — *Stuart*. "This reasoning is not designed to prove that the priesthood of Christ will be literally *eternal*, for its necessity may cease when all the redeemed are in heaven; but that it is permanent, and does not pass from hand to hand." — *Barnes*. When the divine plan is



continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such a high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless,

consummated in the filial love and obedience of all the children of God, then may the Son surrender his priestly as well as his kingly office, "that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

25. *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost.* "He is able to save to the uttermost, that is, always and completely to save, those who humbly approach to God by him as their appointed High Priest, always living to intercede for them in every circumstance of their respective lives, through all successive ages and generations."

—*Doddridge*. "This does not mean simply *forever*; but that he has power to save them so that their salvation shall be *complete*. He does not abandon the work midway; he does not begin a work which he is unable to finish. He can aid us *as long* as we need anything done for our salvation; he can save *all* who will entrust their salvation to him."—*Barnes*. ¶ *To make intercession for them.* A similar assurance was given by the beloved disciple: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 1, 2. As he "gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6, and "tasted death for every man," ch. ii. 9, and became a "propitiation for the sins of the whole world," we may well confide in him as an earnest "advocate with the Father," making "intercession" for all; and we may confidently hope that all will "come unto God by him," in accordance with his labors, and sacrifices, and intercessions, on their behalf,—especially when we consider that the accomplishment of this result

undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

was the precise purpose for which "the Father sent his Son into the world." John iii. 17; 1 John iv. 14.

26. *For such a high priest became us.* Was suitable to our condition. "Such a high priest did our case require."—*Peirce*. ¶ *Holy.* Pure in heart; free from all taint of sinfulness. ¶ *Harmless.* Injuring no person. ¶ *Undefiled.* Free from all pollution by sin. ¶ *Separate from sinners.* Our Lord freely associated with sinners, for the purpose of reclaiming them by an exhibition of divine love, insomuch that his adversaries tauntingly styled him "a friend of publicans and sinners." Matt. xi. 19. But he was separate, free, from their evil thoughts and deeds. ¶ *Made higher than the heavens.* Exalted at the right hand of God. See note on Acts ii. 34, 35.

27. *Who needeth not daily, &c.* "It is not probable that the Jewish high priest himself personally officiated at the offering of sacrifice every day; but the meaning here is, that it was done daily, and that there was need of a daily sacrifice in his behalf. As one of the Jewish people, the sacrifice was offered on his account as well as on account of others; for he partook of the common infirmities and sinfulness of the nation."—*Barnes*. But he who was high priest after the order of Melchisedec, the Messiah, had no such necessity. He needed no sacrifice for himself, because he was entirely free from sin. He needed not to offer a daily sacrifice for his people, because he had, once for all, by a single act, done what was equivalent to a daily sacrifice, and far more efficacious. See ch. x. 1-14. ¶ *Once.* Once for all. The act needed no repetition. ¶ *When he offered up himself.*

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

When he "died for the ungodly," "gave himself a ransom for all," and "tasted death for every man." Rom. v. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9. But in what sense did he thus *offer himself*? "Not as a propitiatory sacrifice, but as having done the will of his Father. To offer himself is not to present himself as an expiatory sacrifice to appease God; for God was already so far appeased as to *send* his Son into the world. There could be no need of reconciling God to man, when he had already shown his love to man so far as to send his Son to reconcile man to God. How, then, are these sacrificial terms to be understood? Christ is called our high priest. The reason of this is, that as none but the high priest could ever enter into the Holy of Holies, when Christ entered the *true* Holy of Holies, that gave him the denomination of our high priest. As Christ was the means by which remission of sins was offered to mankind, and the world was reconciled to God, and made friends with him, hence is he very properly styled a sacrifice; and as he gave his life for this end, and ascended into heaven, having done the will of his Father, he then and there offered himself as having done what his Father had commissioned him to do. — As the end of all sacrifice was to make God and man friends, and Christ laid down his life for this end; and as the high priest alone could enter the Holy of Holies, and Christ entered into the *true* Holy of Holies; hence are the terms sacrifice and high priest justly applied to our Saviour. Still there is a superior advantage in the Christian priesthood, which is here particularly mentioned; and that is, that the high priest was obliged annually to repeat the sacrifice that he offered for the sins of that nation; whereas Christ did once for

## CHAPTER VIII.

NOW of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right

all what he did for the sins of the whole world." — Sykes.

28. *For the law maketh, &c.* The reason is here assigned why Christ need not offer sacrifice daily like the Jewish high priests; namely, the Levitical law constituted men high priests who had infirmities, that is, who were liable daily to commit sin; but the Son, who was designated by the oath, Ps. cx., is without sin, and needs not to confess sin or ask for its forgiveness. ¶ *Who is consecrated for evermore.* "Perfected, or completed forever. The word *τετελειωμένον* is here used in opposition to the *infirmities* of sinning high priests. The Son is *perfected*, where he lives forever in the presence of God, and will continue to all eternity. Had it indeed been said, that the Son, being *consecrated*, will continue forever our high priest, it had been good sense and very intelligible. But that would not answer the purpose of the apostle; for he is speaking concerning the Son, not as consecrated, but as not having infirmities, in opposition to high priests who yearly *confessed* themselves guilty of such. Whereas, if the word be rendered *perfected*, it will convey the idea of being free from all infirmities, as the place requires." — Sykes. "I regard the expression as designed here to convey, for substance, the idea of a state of the highest perfection and exaltation, which forbids the supposition that Jesus can have any such *ἀσθενείαν* (infirmity) as the Jewish priests." — Stuart. The Son "is perfectly fitted for executing the office for evermore, by his absolute freedom from sin, and by his endless life." — Macknight.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum.* "The principal

hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacri-

thing, however, among those of which we are speaking, is," &c. — *Stuart*. "From the fact of a new topic being here introduced, it is plain that the term κεφάλαιον must be interpreted not *sum*, that is, summary or recapitulation, but *principal point*, as Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Theodoret explain." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*. See notes on Acts ii. 33-36; Eph. i. 20-23.

2. A minister of the sanctuary. Or, "of holy things," as in the margin. The Greek will bear either translation; but the context seems to indicate the *most holy place*, rather than holy things. ¶ *The true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man*. "The true tabernacle means that which is spiritual, immutable, and eternal in the heavens; and which, therefore, is called *true* or *real*, in distinction from the earthly tabernacle that was made by the hands of men, and was of materials earthly and perishable. The tabernacle in heaven is the substance; that on earth, the image or type. Hence the former is, by way of distinction, properly named *real*, or that which truly and permanently exists." — *Stuart*.

3. Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts, &c. See note on ch. v. 1. ¶ *It is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer*. "That is, if Christ be high priest, and if such an office is necessarily connected with the duty of presenting some offering, then Christ of course must present one." — *Stuart*. The apostle does not here state what offering was presented by our heavenly high priest; but he indicates it with sufficient precision in ch. x. 4-9. See note on ch. vii. 27.

4. For if he were on earth, &c. "The design of this is, to show a

fices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

5 Who serve unto the exam-

reason why he was removed to heaven. The reason was, that on earth there were those who were set apart to that office, and that he, not being of the same tribe with them, could not officiate as priest. There was an order of men here on earth consecrated already to that office, and hence it was necessary that the Lord Jesus, in performing the functions of the office, should be removed to another sphere." — *Barnes*. "Here the apostle goes on to show, that if our Saviour had continued upon earth, he could not have been a *priest* at all; nor could he have acted as such; for our Lord came out of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. Ch. vii. 14. He could not therefore have acted as a priest whilst he was on earth. But, besides this, there was no occasion for him to take upon himself that office, because there are priests that offer gifts according to the law, ver. 4. Hence it follows (1.) That he never did act as a priest upon earth. (2.) That he did not offer himself as a *sacrifice* upon the cross; for if he had offered himself at that time as a sacrifice, he must have acted as a priest upon earth. (3.) That the cross is not, nor can it be considered, in any sense, as an altar. And if we were to understand our Saviour's oblation of himself upon the cross, as an altar, we must contradict the express words of the apostle, who says, 'If he were on earth, he should not be a priest.' And hence, lastly, it follows, that the oblation of himself upon earth, or the shedding his blood, was no part of his sacerdotal office; for this was all done and over before his priesthood began." — *Sykes*.

5. Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. "And these do service to the tabernacle, which

ple and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

was a draught or shadow of heavenly things."—*Peirce*. See ch. xiii. 10, for a similar reference to the tabernacle or temple service. "The same who perform service in (that tabernacle which is) a mere copy of the heavenly (sanctuary); compare ver. 2, and ix. 24."—*Stuart*. ¶ See, saith he, &c. See Exo. xxv. 9, 40; xxvi. 30; xxvii. 8. "The apostle plainly determines what he meant by his citing that passage from the law: 'See that thou make all things after their pattern, which was shown thee in the mount.' Exo. xxv. 40. When our author adds, *καὶ σκιά*, 'and shadow,' he opposes shadow to body or substance. The tabernacle made by Moses from a pattern shown in the mount was a mere nothing compared to heavenly things. Christ, therefore, acting as our high priest in heaven itself, must as much excel those who minister in the earthly tabernacle, as a body or substance excels a mere shadow. And hence an argument arises for the superior advantage which there is in the Christian profession over that of the Jewish religion. Let it here be observed that St. Paul has used the same expression here, as he did, Col. ii. 17, 'which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.'"—*Sykes*.

6. *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry.* Christ, being a minister in the "true tabernacle," has a more excellent ministry than those "priests that offer gifts according to the law," not only because he serves in a more glorious temple, but because he renders a more important and glorious service. ¶ *By how much also*, &c. "As much more as the covenant, of which he is the mediator, is superior (to the ancient one), being sanctioned by better promises.—The better prom-

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no

ises follow in ver. 8-13. The imperfection of the first covenant, and the perfection of the second, is further disclosed in ch. ix. 9-14; x. 1-22; xiii. 9-14. From these passages, it appears that the first covenant promised only external purification, together with the civil or ecclesiastical pardon of an offender who complied with the rites which it enjoined; but, under the new covenant, real pardon of sin by God is to be obtained, with purification and peace of conscience, the hope of eternal life, and union at last with the assembly of the redeemed in a better world. The sentiment of the apostle, then, in our verse, stands thus: the office with which Christ is invested as a priest, or his priestly function, is as much superior to that of the Levitical priests, as the covenant under which he holds his office excels, in the blessings which it promises, the covenant introduced by Moses."—*Stuart*. "This is a *better* covenant than the old, inasmuch as it relates mainly to the heart; to the pardon of sin; to a spiritual and holy religion. See ver. 10. The former related more to external rites and observances, and was destined to vanish away. See ver. 13."—*Barnes*. The promises, upon which this covenant was established, were *better* than the former, not only because they secured *better* blessings, but also because they secured them more effectually. The old covenant was a covenant of works; blessings were promised on condition of perfect obedience. The new covenant is a covenant of grace; blessings are promised as a gracious gift; and the promise is unconditional, inasmuch as its fulfilment depends solely on the faithfulness of God. See notes on ver. 9-12. This distinction is exhibited

place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah :

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them

out of the land of Egypt ; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord ; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts : and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people :

distinctly and fully in the epistle to the Romans. See note on Rom. i. 17.

7. *For if that first covenant had been faultless.* "Free from defect. The meaning is not that the Mosaic economy had *positive* faults, namely, such things as were palpably wrong or erroneous ; but that it did not contain in itself all the provision necessary for the pardon of sin, and the rendering of the conscience peaceful and pure ; which the gospel does effect." — *Stuart*. ¶ *Then should no place have been sought for the second.* Any change would have been for the worse, if the first had been in all respects "free from defect."

8. *For finding fault with them, he saith, &c.* Or, "whereas, he findeth fault, and saith unto them." — *Conybeare*. That is, finding fault with that first covenant, which was not "faultless," he saith to the Jews, who were under that covenant. To the same effect, *Stuart* and others. ¶ *Behold the days come, &c.* This language, ver. 8-12, is quoted almost literally from Jer. xxxi. 31-34. ¶ *The days come.* The time of the Messiah. ¶ *I will make a new covenant.* This is what is styled the "better covenant" in ver. 6. See ver. 10-12. The word covenant is popularly understood as an agreement between two contracting parties. As here used, it rather denotes "properly the arrangement or disposition which God made with men in regard to salvation ; the system of statutes, directions, laws, and promises, by which men are to become subject to him, and to be saved." — *Barnes*.

9. *Not according to the covenant, &c.* "This clause is explanatory of the word *καὶνὴν* (*new*) in the preceding verse. The meaning is, — the covenant which I will make at a future period with the Jewish nation (that is, the dispensation under which I will place them) shall be different from that which I made when I brought them out of Egypt." — *Stuart*. ¶ *Because they continued not in my covenant.* Because they failed to perform the conditions upon which the blessings were promised. The lack of perfection in the old covenant, or one of the reasons why it was ineffectual, is here indicated. It was a covenant of works. "The man which doeth those things shall live by them." None could yield perfect obedience, and none obtained fulness of life, or perfect happiness. The new covenant is founded on better promises. It depends for fulfilment, not on the works of men, but on the faithfulness of God. See notes on ver. 10-12. This distinction is fully described by the apostle in Rom. x. 1-10.

10. *I will put my laws into their mind, &c.* "To put laws into their minds of course means to inscribe or engrave them as it were, that is, deeply to infix them. 'And I will engrave them upon their hearts,' or inscribe them upon their hearts, — an expression parallel to the preceding, and of the same import. The meaning of both is, I will give them a lasting spirit of obedience to my laws, so that they will no more violate them as they have done ; that is, the new covenant shall be distinguished from the old by a higher and more permanent spirit of

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

13 In that he saith, A new

covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

## CHAPTER IX.

**T**HEN verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

obedience in those who live under it."

—*Stuart*. ¶ *And I will be to them a God, &c.* I will both recognize and manifest my relationship to mankind. I am the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. Numb. xxvii. 16; Heb. xii. 9. I will fully execute my purpose to gather and bless all my children in my beloved Son. Eph. i. 9–11. It is observable that, in this new covenant, the promises are not yea and nay, conditional, dependent for fulfilment on human actions beyond divine control, but they are absolute, yea and amen, to the glory of God. 2 Cor. i. 19, 20. God declares what he will do, and what men shall do. And while we may not suppose he will force men to heaven, we may confidently believe he will attract and draw them thither by the irresistible influence of his love.

11. *And they shall not teach, &c.* There shall be no necessity that they should instruct each other. The idea is repeated, in a Hebrew parallel. ¶ *For all shall know me, &c.* "That is, all of whatever rank or condition, high or low, rich or poor, all classes of people, shall have a knowledge of God." — *Stuart*.

12. *For I will be merciful, &c.* Salvation from sin is not attainable by human exertion; but it is mercifully bestowed by divine grace. And herein is the new covenant better than the old. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John i. 17. ¶ *Will I remember no more.* They shall no longer continue; they shall be as if they had never existed. If God remember not the sins, he will surely no longer treat men as sinners. The new covenant

clearly indicates the final triumph of good over evil, and the deliverance of all men "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 21.

13. *In that he saith, a new covenant, &c.* "The Sinaitic covenant, before it was abrogated by Christ, was become old, see ch. i. 11, or useless. The covenant of the law was introduced to prefigure the good things to come under the covenant of the gospel. But when these good things were actually bestowed, there was no longer any use for the typical services of the law. The Jewish doctors, by teaching that pardon was to be obtained only by the Levitical sacrifices, and the Judaizing Christians, by affirming that under the gospel itself men are pardoned only through the efficacy of those sacrifices, both the one and the other had corrupted the law; on which account it was fit to lay it aside, as a thing whose tendency was now to nourish superstition." — *Macknight*. The superiority of the new covenant over the old, in so many important particulars, is urged by the apostle as a dissuasive against apostasy from Christianity. See note at the beginning of ch. v. It should be efficacious, also, in confirming our loyalty to Christ.

## CHAPTER IX.

1. *The first covenant had also ordinances, &c.* Or, *ceremonies*, as in the margin, ¶ *And a worldly sanctuary.* In contrasting the two covenants, the apostle shows that both the ceremonies prescribed by the "first," and the place where they were rendered, were in

2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

3 And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all;

4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold,

wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

5 And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tab-

their own nature transitory and perishable; and that, at the best, they were but a shadow of the spiritual service required by the "better covenant," and the heavenly sanctuary into which our great High Priest has entered.

2. *For there was a tabernacle made, &c.* A full description of the tabernacle, which Moses, by divine command, erected in the wilderness, is given in Exo. ch. xxvi. There are good reasons for believing that the apostle specially refers to this tabernacle, rather than to the sanctuary in the temple long afterwards erected by Solomon according to the same pattern. ¶ *The first.* That is, the first room in the tabernacle, separated by a vail from the inner room, or the Holy of Holies. This outer apartment, containing the golden candlestick, the table, and the shew-bread, was called the sanctuary. The holy things contained in the two apartments, enumerated in ver. 2-5, are particularly described in Exo. ch. xxv.

3. *And after the second vail.* The first vail served as a door, to guard the entrance to the apartment "called the sanctuary" in ver. 2. The "second vail" divided this from the inner apartment of the same "tabernacle which is called the holiest of all," or the Holy of Holies.

4. *Which had the golden censer.* The vessel in which incense was burned. Lev. xvi. 12, 13. ¶ *The ark of the covenant.* Exo. xxv. 10-16. This ark, or coffer, in which was deposited the law or "covenant," graven on two tables of stone, was prized by the Jews as the most choice treasure in

the tabernacle, and was guarded with the utmost care. ¶ *The golden pot.* See Exo. xvi. 32-34. "Nothing is said, indeed, of its being *golden*, in the Hebrew; of the fact that it was so, no one will be disposed to doubt, who reads a description of the furniture of the most holy place, and finds that almost everything within it was either pure gold, or was overlaid with gold." — *Stuart.* ¶ *And Aaron's rod that budded.* See Numb. xvii. 1-10. ¶ *And the tables of the covenant.* See Exo. xxv. 16; xxxi. 18; Deut. x. 1, 2.

5. *And over it the cherubim of glory, &c.* See Exo. xxv. 18-22. ¶ *Shadowing the mercy-seat.* This was the cover of the ark of the covenant, where the divine presence was visibly manifested. Exo. xxv. 17, 21, 22. See note on Rom. iii. 25. ¶ *Of which we cannot now speak particularly.* "That is, it is not my present design to speak particularly of these things. These matters were well understood by those to whom he wrote, and his object did not require him to go into a fuller explanation." — *Barnes.*

6. *Now when these things were thus ordained.* Thus appointed; thus arranged. ¶ *The priests went always into the first tabernacle.* The ordinary priests were required to enter the outer tabernacle daily, to light the lamps and burn incense before the Lord, morning and evening, Exo. xxx. 7, 8; and to renew the twelve loaves of shew-bread every Sabbath. Lev. xxiv 5-9. These and similar services are here styled "accomplishing the service of God."

ernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

7 But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people :

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the

first tabernacle was yet standing :

9 Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience ;

10 Which *stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances,

7. *But into the second.* Into the inner sanctuary, "which is called the holiest of all," ver. 3. ¶ *Went the high priest alone, once every year.* None were permitted to enter this apartment except the high priest, and he only on one day in the year. "On the great day of atonement, it appears that the high priest went thrice into the inner sanctuary, Lev. xvi. 2, 12, 14, 15; to which, perhaps may be added once more, in order to bring out the golden censer; and this accords well with the Jewish tradition, namely, that the high priest entered the sanctuary four times on the great day of expiation. However, it is quite possible that fire might have been carried into the most holy place on another censer, and then transferred to the golden one which belonged there."—*Stuart*. ¶ *Not without blood, &c.* Namely the blood of a young bullock and of a goat, as a sin offering for himself and for the errors of the people, sprinkling it upon the mercy-seat and before it. See Lev. xvi. 1-17.

8. *The Holy Ghost this signifying, &c.* "The Holy Spirit here mentioned is that Spirit which guided the ancient prophets; which taught Moses what arrangement to make for the service of God; and which signified, by these arrangements, what the apostle here affirms.—Through Jesus only, Jews and Gentiles have free access, at all times, to the mercy-seat of heaven; compare Eph. ii. 18; Heb. iv. 16. This way was before obstructed by numerous ceremonial rites, and limited as to times and persons."—*Stuart*.

9. *Which was a figure, &c.* Literally a *parable*. See note on ch. x. 1.

¶ *As pertaining to the conscience.*

"The gifts and sacrifices, either those of the tabernacle, or those offered in the temple at this present time, cannot make the worshipper, be he ever so conscientious, *perfect*, because they all consist in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal rites, only, imposed until the time of reformation. The great point of the apostle was to show that the Jewish sanctuary, and all that belonged to it, was worldly, and had nothing that was internally good in its view; and therefore that the things enjoined in the law were only what related to present good things; and, in consequence, that as they could not make the man that observed them *perfect*, they were not to be compared to the things promised by the new covenant."—*Sykes*. "That could not take away sin, and remove the stains of guilt on the soul."—*Barnes*. See notes on ch. vii. 19; x. 1, 2.

10. *Which stood only in meats and drinks, &c.* "The idea is, that the ordinances of the Jews, in connection with the services of religion, consisted much of laws pertaining to what was lawful to eat and drink, &c. A considerable part of those laws related to the distinction between clean and unclean beasts, and to such arrangements as were designed to keep them externally distinct from other nations. It is possible also that there may be a reference here to meat and drink offerings."—*Barnes*. The *divers washings, or baptisms*, denote "those ceremonial ablutions, some respecting the priests, other the Levites, or the people at large, which are detailed in the Books



Imposed on them until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle. not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of

goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh;

of Leviticus and Numbers." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Carnal ordinances*. Or, "rites or ceremonies," as in the margin. "Greek, 'ordinances of the flesh'; that is, which pertained to the flesh, or to external ceremonies. The object was rather to keep them *externally* pure than to cleanse the conscience and make them holy in heart." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Imposed on them*. Not oppressively or injuriously, but rather beneficently appointed, as preliminary to a "better covenant," and designed only for temporary continuance. ¶ *Until the time of reformation*. This phrase "plainly means, the time of the gospel dispensation." — *Stuart*.

11. *But Christ being come, &c.* The advent of Christ introduced a better state of things, which the apostle proceeds to set forth at large in the remainder of this chapter and the whole of the next. ¶ *By a greater and more perfect tabernacle*. "He passed through the greater and more perfect tabernacle. — This greater tabernacle is the visible heavens, which are here regarded as the outer sanctuary." — *Conybeare*. "The comparison is made with the high priest of the Jews, who passed through the outer sanctuary when he entered into the inner one, upon the great day of atonement. The probability is, that the writer compared in his own mind the visible heavens (through which Jesus passed in his ascension on high, ch. iv. 14; vi. 20; viii. 1, 2), with the vail which separated the outer sanctuary of the Jewish temple from the inner one; the clouds or sky (which conceal the temple above from our view) being resembled to the vail of the inner temple." — *Stuart*.

12. *Neither by the blood of goats, &c.* The high priest entered the most holy

place with the blood of a bullock, Lev. xvi. 3, 11 (which is here called the blood of a calf), and with the blood of a goat. Lev. xvi. 9, 15. ¶ *But by his own blood*. In passing from earth to the heavenly tabernacle, our Lord became obedient even to the death of the cross; with his own blood therefore he entered, once for all, into the holy place. ¶ *Having obtained eternal redemption for us*. "Having found eternal redemption. If we render the word *εὐρίκμενος*, *obtained*, and mean by that, that Christ *obtained* of his Father, by his death, eternal redemption for us, the difficulty is obvious, namely, how to account for that's being the *gift*, or the *free gift* of God, which was *bought* of him, and bought with a price. Grotius has well expressed the meaning of this place, — 'a method being found by which he might deliver us from our sins forever.' Christ being a high priest, through whom we are to have, not present, but future good things, hath entered once for all into the true Holy of Holies, having found out the means of eternal deliverance from all sins, and not a freedom from temporal evils, as the law of Moses prescribed." — *Sykes*.

13. *Sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh*. Under the law, the people became subject to ceremonial uncleanness, either by personal misconduct, or accidentally, and were prohibited from engaging in the exercises of public worship. Such uncleanness was legally removed by the sprinkling of blood and ashes, in the prescribed manner. For an example, see Numb. ch. xix. The argument is, if the blood of bulls and of goats be effectual thus far, the blood of Christ will accomplish much more, ver. 14.

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

15 And for this cause he is

the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

14. *How much more, &c.* "The blood of a man is much more valuable than the blood of a goat or calf. The blood of Christ is still more precious, being the blood of the Son of God. Now, if he condescended to become man, and to live here, and act under the direction of the Spirit, must not his blood be still more valuable? and ought we not to be the more careful in observing his laws? Or thus: suppose that the apostle's argument is not taken from the value of the blood offered, but to be a mere comparison between the blood of Christ, as purging the conscience, and the blood of goats and calves on the day of expiation, as purging the sins of the people. If these were done away, or *purged* (as being acts committed against the law), by such oblations, and the people were reinstated, and entitled to *present* blessings, how much more effectual will the blood of Christ prove, to make us easy as to what he has promised, a remission of our sins." — *Sykes*.

¶ *Purge your conscience, &c.* It is generally supposed that the word *conscience* does not indicate that faculty of the soul which approves or condemns, but rather what may be styled the inward consciousness. "This is said figuratively to be purified, by the removal of the oppressive sense of conscious guilt cleaving to us, like the fatal robe of Nessus, and entailing spiritual death." — *Bloomfield*. Or the meaning may be that the doctrine taught by Christ, his labors, his love, his sacrifices, all which are represented by his blood, are efficacious in turning men from sin to holiness, and thus redeeming them from iniquity. Acts iii. 26; Tit. ii. 14.

15. *He is the mediator of the new testament, &c.* See note on ch. viii.

6. Our Lord having proclaimed the

gospel of grace, sealed the truth of his testimony with his own blood; so that whatever is accomplished by the gospel, or by the grace which it manifests, is sometimes figuratively said to be accomplished by his blood. In some such figurative manner, much of the language in this chapter and the next must be understood. The importance of the following note, as throwing light on this obscure subject, justifies its length. "And through, or by means of, this, he is the mediator of the new covenant. The word *διαθήκη* has all along this epistle been truly rendered *covenant*; and so it should have been here. The apostle gives the reason why Christ was the mediator of a new covenant through his blood; namely, because as by the intervention of *death* assurance was made or given, that transgressions under the *first* covenant should be pardoned, so likewise under the *second* covenant, by means of death, the heirs of promise should have assurance that their sins should be remitted, and they entitled to an everlasting inheritance. There is a general likeness or similitude in the two great scenes of God's providence. There was death in the first covenant in order to the establishing of that law, which gave assurance that their sins of ignorance should be forgiven, and that they should, if they would conform to what was commanded, enjoy a *present, temporal* possession. There was likewise death in the second covenant, to establish that; and to give assurance that those to whom that was made should enjoy a *future* and *eternal* inheritance. It was expedient that Christ should be made man, or be partaker of 'flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

17 For a testament is of

death.' Ch. ii. 14. The man Christ therefore was *mediator* through his *blood*, that as death intervened for the freeing men from transgressions, and giving them a present enjoyment in the land of Canaan, under the first covenant; in like manner, under the second covenant, they who are called to an everlasting inheritance may, by the intervening of death, receive assurance of the pardon of their sins, and of happiness in heaven. The repetition of the words, 'by the intervening of death,' in this last clause, helps us to explain the following verses, which are otherwise excessive hard, if intelligible at all. — It is not said that Christ's death was for the redemption of transgressions under the first covenant; but only that death intervened for that purpose. But whose death, or what death, is not said. Christ was the mediator of the new covenant, and died, that, by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. It is certain that the apostle is speaking of the ratification of each of the covenants; of that of Moses, from ver. 19 to ver. 23; of that of the second covenant, from ver. 23 to ver. 28. And there is not any intimation, anywhere, that the death of Christ was for the redemption of sins under the first covenant." — *Sykes*.

16, 17. *For where a testament is, &c.* If these two verses were considered without reference to the context, they would be most naturally understood as descriptive of what is frequently styled the last will and testament of an individual. Of such an instrument, it is strictly true, that "it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth," because he may alter or destroy it whenever he chooses to do so. That it may become valid in law, therefore, and operate as a legal conveyance of its several bequests, "the death of the testator" is necessary. Such, indeed,

force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

18 Whereupon neither the

have many commentators supposed to be the apostle's meaning in this passage; but not all. "In this obscure passage the difficulty mainly turns on the import of the word *διαθήκης*. The sense formerly assigned to it, *testament*, is now generally rejected, from its involving something like an absurdity. For how, it is asked, can any one be called the *mediator* of a *testament*? How can a testament need a mediator? How can any one be called the mediator of his *own* testament? How can the Mosaic law be called a testament? Who was the testator? And how can it be said that the testator died to render it valid? This, indeed, is so plain, that no expositors of any note now contend for the same *testament throughout* the passage [ver. 15–18]; though some ascribe to it the *double* sense of covenant and testament, namely, a covenant which partakes of the nature of a testament." — *Bloomfield*. "There is not the least circumstance relative to any *will* made by Christ; nor does the word *διαθήκη* ever signify a *will* in the sacred writings. Nor can it signify any such thing in this place, because the apostle is treating all along this epistle of two *covenants*; a first, which was to give way to a second; a first, that was faulty, and old, and imperfect; a second, that was new, a better one, a perfect one, ch. vii. 22; viii. 6–10, 13. In this chapter, he tells us of a first covenant, which had certain ordinances of divine service; and then he mentions, in opposition to that first covenant, a new covenant, of which Christ was the mediator. How, then, could he pass immediately from the subject he was upon, to speak of *wills*, or *testaments*, and testators (which is all foreign to his purpose), and then, after two short verses, return to his subject as he does?" — *Sykes*. "The Lord Jesus made no such *will*. He had no property, and the commandments and instructions which he gave to his disciples were not of the

first *testament* was dedicated without blood.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the

nature of a *will* or *testament*. Such an illustration would not be pertinent to the design of the apostle, or in keeping with his argument. He is comparing the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and the point of comparison in this chapter relates to the question about the efficacy of sacrifice in the two arrangements. He showed that the arrangement for blood-shedding by sacrifice entered into both; that the high priest of both offered blood, and that consequently there was *death* in both the arrangements or dispensations. The former arrangement or dispensation was ratified by blood, and it was equally proper that the new arrangement should be also. The point of comparison is not that Moses made a will or testament which could be of force only when he died, and that the same thing was required in the new dispensation; but it is that the former covenant was ratified by blood, or by the death of a victim, and that it might be expected that the new dispensation would be confirmed, and that it was in fact confirmed, in the same manner. In this view of the argument, what pertinency would there be in introducing an illustration respecting a *will* and the manner in which it became efficient? It seems clear, therefore, to me, that the word rendered *testament* here is to be taken in the sense in which it is ordinarily used in the New Testament. The opinion that the word here means such a divine arrangement as is commonly denoted a *covenant*, and not *testament*, is sanctioned by not a few names of eminence in criticism, such as Peirce, Doddridge, Michaelis, Steudel, and the late Dr. J. P. Wilson. Bloomfield says that the connection here demands this." The word διαθήκη, here rendered *testator*, "should be rendered the *covenanter*, or 'the victim set apart to be slain!'"—The fair meaning of the word here may be, whatever goes to arrange, dispose, or settle the cove-

people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprin-

nant, or to make the covenant secure. If the reference be to a compact, it cannot relate to one of the contracting parties, because the death of neither is necessary to confirm it. But it may refer to that which was well known as an established opinion, that a covenant with God was ratified only by a sacrifice.—It seems to me, therefore, that the word here may, without impropriety, be regarded as referring to the victim that was slain in order to ratify a covenant with God, and that the meaning is, that such a covenant was not regarded as confirmed until the victim was slain. It may be added that the authority of Michaelis, Macknight, Doddridge, Bloomfield, and Dr. J. P. Wilson, is a proof that such an interpretation cannot be a very serious departure from the proper use of a Greek word."—*Barnes*. The following translation and paraphrase are substantially in accordance with these remarks. "For where a covenant is, there must be necessarily introduced the death of that which establisheth the covenant; because a covenant is confirmed over dead things, and is of no force at all whilst that, which establisheth the covenant, is alive."—*Wakefield*. "For where a covenant is, answerable to that which typified this of [which] I now speak, it necessarily imports the death of that by which the covenant is confirmed; for you know that sacrificial rites have ever attended the most celebrated covenants which God hath made with men; so that I may say, a covenant is confirmed over the dead, so that it does not avail, nor has any force at all, while he by whom it is confirmed liveth. From whence, and on which principle, we may observe, neither was the first covenant, of which we have been speaking, I mean that of Moses, originally transacted without the blood of an appointed sacrifice."—*Doddridge*.

18. *Whereupon*. Or, whence; where-

kled both the book and all the people,

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

fore. ¶ *The first testament.* Or, *covenant*; meaning the Mosaic law. See ver. 19–21. ¶ *Was dedicated without blood.* Or, ratified, solemnized, consecrated. “It was ratified by the blood of the animals that were slain in sacrifice. The blood was then sprinkled on the principal objects that were regarded as holy under that dispensation.”—*Barnes*. These ceremonies are mentioned more particularly in the following verses.

19, 20. *When Moses had spoken every precept, &c.* “Moses took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of all the people. Exo. xxiv. 3, 7. The covenant at that time read was the Ten Commandments only; or possibly the whole twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third chapters of Exodus; not the whole law of Moses, as it lies in Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, or the remainder of even Exodus itself.”—*Sykes*.

¶ *He took the blood of calves and of goats, &c.* See Exo. xxiv. 3–8. “Moses, in his account of this transaction, says nothing of the *blood of goats*, nor of the *water and scarlet wool*, nor the *hyssop*, nor of the *sprinkling the book* of the law with blood; circumstances supposed to have been derived from ancient tradition, and adverted to by the writer as things well known to his readers. Be that as it may, since similar rites are mentioned in Lev. xiv. 4–6, 49–52, there can be little doubt that they were used on this occasion. The water and hyssop are easily accounted for, as necessary, or at least very suitable, to the thing performed; and that it was usual for water to be mixed with the blood, we learn from Lev. xiv. 49–51. Finally, as to the sprinkling of the book, that involves no discrepancy, being only an addition to, though no variation from, the Mosaic account; and as the altar was sprinkled, so might the *book*, as it lay upon the

21 Moreover he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are

altar. Mr. Conybeare bids us remember ‘that the Old Testament is usually referred to *memoriter* by the writers of the New Testament.’ However, he grants (all that we can desire) that the advocates of verbal inspiration would be justified in maintaining that these circumstances actually occurred, though they are not mentioned in the books of Moses.”—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *This is the blood of the testament, &c.* Rather, the blood of the covenant, as the following words indicate. See note on Matt. xxvi. 28.

21. *Moreover he sprinkled likewise, &c.* “The dedication of the tabernacle, here adverted to, is described at Exod. xl. 8, seq., and Lev. viii. 10, seq.; where, however, the circumstance in question is not mentioned, and might very well, for brevity’s sake, be omitted by Moses. It is supposed to have been derived from tradition, and mention of it is made in Josephus and Philo.”—*Bloomfield*.

22. *And almost all things, &c.* “It is a general custom to purify everything by blood. This rule was not universal, for some things were purified by fire and water, Numb. xxxi. 22, 23, and some by water only. Numb. xxxi. 24; Lev. xvi. 26, 28. But the exceptions to the general rule were few. Almost everything in the tabernacle and temple service was consecrated or purified by blood.”—*Barnes*. ¶ *And without shedding of blood is no remission.* “Here the word *almost*, mentioned in the preceding part of this verse, is to be repeated; for it is not universally true that, by the law, remission of sins was not to be had where there was no shedding of blood. In cases of poor people, who could not afford two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin-offering; and he shall bring it to the priest, and the

by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23 *It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.*

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with

priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him. Lev. v. 11, 13. — So that it is only true, in general, that remission is owing by the law to blood. — The apostle means, that, under the law, sacrifices or blood, in general, took away the effects which would have arisen from offences against the law. So, too, when cleansing is applied to *things*, it consisted in removing whatever was disagreeable from it, and making it *clean* and fit for the use it was designed." — *Sykes*. Yet it must be remembered that the apostle here speaks of purification from ceremonial defilement; all the offerings of blood were ineffectual to the removal of sin, or moral guilt. See ch. x. 4.

23. *The patterns of things, &c.* Namely, the tabernacle and its furniture, before mentioned. ¶ *But the heavenly things themselves.* "The heavenly tabernacle or sanctuary into which Christ has entered, and where he performs the functions of his ministry. The use of the word *purified*, here applied to heaven, does not imply that heaven was before *unholy*, but it denotes that it is now made accessible to sinners; or that they may come and worship there in an acceptable manner." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Better sacrifices.* Christ's sacrifice of himself. See ver. 26.

24. *Holy places made with hands.* The Jewish tabernacle, or, the most holy place in the temple. ¶ *To appear in the presence of God for us.* See 1 John ii. 1, 2. "The whole comparison is taken from the custom of the Jewish high priest, who, when he entered

hands, *which are the figures of the true*; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the founda-

the most holy place, was said to appear before God, or to draw near to God, because the presence of God was manifested over the mercy-seat, in the Holy of Holies, and God was represented and was conceived of by the Jews, as sitting enthroned upon the mercy-seat. Now as the high priest appeared before God, in the Jewish temple, and offered the blood of beasts for expiation on the great day of atonement, in behalf of the Jewish nation; so Christ, in the heavenly temple, enters the most holy place with his own blood (ver. 12) to procure pardon for us." — *Stuart*.

25. *Nor yet that he should offer himself often, &c.* It was required that the high priest should repeat the sacrifices and enter the holy place every year. Not so in regard to Christ; he entered once for all, and needed not to offer himself again. See notes on ver. 12, 26.

26. *For then must he often have suffered, &c.* "Nothing is here said relative to the extent of Christ's sufferings to the ages antecedent to his coming into the world; but what the apostle designed was to show the difference between the high priest's offering *once every year*, and Christ's offering *but once for all*; that had frequent oblation been necessary, then Christ must have offered himself often since the foundation of the world. But instead of *frequent* oblation, there was no occasion that he should suffer more than *once*, in order to obtain the end designed. So that here are two points in which the superior advantage of Christ is evident. (1.) Whereas the high priest took away the sins of the *Jews only*, and offered sacrifice in order to

tion of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away

sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed

remove their offences, Christ took away the sins of *all mankind*. (2.) Whereas, the high priest was obliged to do his office annually, and sacrificed annually calves and goats, Christ did his office fully and completely by one oblation of himself once offered."—*Sykes*. ¶ *But now once*. Once only; once for all. ¶ *In the end of the world*. At the close of this age. By the end of the world "is meant, towards the close of the Mosaic dispensation. See note on 1 Cor. x. 11. Schoetgen supposes the term *συντέλεια* to be here used, rather than *τέλος*, by way of marking the junction of the two *τέλη*, or periods, by the close of the first running into the commencement of the second. — Accordingly, it is well observed by Bengel, that 'the sacrifice of Christ divides the whole age or duration of the world into two parts, and extends its virtue backward and forward, from this middle point where they meet, to abolish both the guilt and the power of sin.'"—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *To put away sin*, &c. See notes on Acts iii. 26; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 2 Cor. v. 18–20; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. ii. 14; Heb. ii. 14.

27. *As it is appointed unto men*. That is, the men with whom Christ is compared in this whole chapter, and the next, namely, the priests or the succession of high priests, under the law. ¶ *Once to die*. To die figuratively, or by proxy, in the offering of sacrifice, once a year, on the great day of atonement. Exod. xxx. 1–10; Lev. xvi. 3–19, 29–34. ¶ *But after this the judgment*. Having slain the sacrifice, and thus having died by proxy, the high priest entered the holy place, with solemn ceremonies, where the divine judgment of absolution was pronounced from the mercy-seat, Exo. xxv. 22; Num. vii. 89; which judgment was afterwards proclaimed to the great congregation by the priest, when he came forth from the holy place, having obtained forgiveness for himself and for them.

28. *So Christ was once offered*. Not

by proxy, but personally, Christ submitted to death, and "offered himself without spot to God," "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Ver. 14, 26. ¶ *To bear the sins of many*. See note on Matt. viii. 17. The apostle is supposed here to refer to the scape-goat, which was sent into the wilderness on the great day of atonement, when other sacrifices were slain. See additional note, *infra*. ¶ *And unto them that look for him*, &c. Having prepared a place for them, he will come again and receive them to himself. John xiv. 3. As the high priest announced absolution from ceremonial and legal defilement to the congregation who watched for his coming out from the holy place, so should Christ announce *salvation* from sin to those for whom he had tasted death and given himself a ransom. Ch. ii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 6.

ADDITIONAL NOTE. — The more common interpretation of ver. 27, 28, has been concisely stated thus: "In the close of the chapter, the apostle adverts to the fact that there was a remarkable resemblance, in one respect, between the death of Christ and the death of all men. It was appointed to them to die once, and but once, and so Christ died but once. As a man, it was in accordance with the universal condition of things that he should die once; and in accordance with the same condition of things it was proper that he should die *but* once. In like manner, there was a resemblance or fitness in regard to what would occur after death. Man was to appear at the judgment. He was not to cease to be, but would stand hereafter at the bar of God. In like manner, Christ would again appear. He did not cease to exist when he expired, but would appear again, that he might save his people, ver. 27, 28."—*Barnes*. The first question which demands solution is, whether the apostle here compares the death of Christ with the literal or natural death of mankind generally, or with the figurative death of the

unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Jewish priests, who died by proxy when they slew the prescribed sacrifices. In proof of the latter, much stress has been laid by some writers on the fact that the *article* occurs in the Greek text, indicating, as they insist, that the phrase should be translated, "as it is appointed to *the men*," or *those men*, namely, the men with whom Christ had already been several times compared in the preceding verses. I neither affirm nor deny the force of this argument; but I prefer to let the case rest on firmer ground than a mere verbal criticism, wherein experts disagree. In my judgment, the general scope of the whole discourse, from ch. iv. 14, and especially from ch. vii. 26, to x. 23, indicates that the comparison here is between our great High Priest and the Jewish priests, and not between Christ and mankind at large; and the same fact is indicated by the terms of the comparison itself. The general design of the apostle is to exhibit the superiority of the new covenant, and of Christ as its high priest, over the old covenant, and the Jewish priests by whom it was administered. "Chap. ix. contains a particular account of the tabernacle and the sacrifices offered in it; and, comparing them with the sacrifice of Christ, the apostle shows that those were in every respect inferior to this. The tabernacle of the Jews was a worldly tabernacle; that which Christ entered was a heavenly one. The blood of their sacrifices purified only the flesh; the blood of Christ purges the conscience. Christ did more by *once for all* entering into the Holy of Holies than their high priests could do by entering *once every year*, all their lives long, continually. Chap. x. shows that the sacrifices under the law could not make the comers thereto perfect; but the sacrifice of Christ effectually did this, by perfecting forever them that are sanctified."—*Sykes*. See first note on chap. i. It seems unnatural, at least, that the apostle should have turned suddenly aside from his comparison of

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;

the two priesthoods, to speak of the physical death common to all mortals, "which is all foreign to his purpose, and then, after two short verses, return to his subject as he does." See note on ver. 16, 17. We should not so interpret his language, unless this be its most obvious import, and unless there be grave difficulties in the way of an interpretation consistent with his general theme. But the fact is otherwise; this is not the most obvious import of the language, and the real difficulty is involved in its application to the literal or natural death of men in general, instead of the figurative or sacrificial death of those who ministered at the altar. It is not pretended that the death of mankind generally is sacrificial; and it is not denied that the death of Christ is here represented as a sacrifice. Does the apostle mean to say, — as all men die in a literal sense, so Christ died in an entirely different sense? for the language is manifestly descriptive of a sacrifice. Is this a legitimate comparison? The difficulty disappears, if we understand death in a sacrificial sense on both sides of the comparison, in accordance with the general scope of the discourse. The high priests offered sacrifices daily, thus dying figuratively, or by proxy; but "this he did once, when he offered up himself." Ch. vii. 27. "Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat to offer." Ch. viii. 3. "The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; but by his own blood [Christ] entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Ver. 6–12. "The high priest entered into the holy place every year with the blood of others; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared,



and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second

to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Ver. 25, 26. Then follows the comparison, that as others die once, "so Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of many," or the many, or all. Unquestionably it is most natural to understand the apostle to speak of the same persons and the same death which he had before mentioned, in similar terms, namely, the death of the priests, by proxy, in their sacrifices. This conclusion is even more obvious, when it is considered that this comparison is only preliminary to another, concerning the consequences resulting from the death described; namely, as the death of men (whether few or many) was followed by "the judgment," so the sacrificial death of Christ, when he "was once offered to bear the sins of many," was followed by his "appearing the second time without sin unto salvation." Comparisons, like parables, need not be required "to go on all-fours," or to have a precise counterpart in every particular; but they should not involve contradictions. The comparison *so as* implies similarity of condition or result; opposites should be stated in contrast; they require the disjunctive but, or its equivalent, as in Rom. vi. 23. To say that, if the blood of the sacrifices offered by the high priest "sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh," even so, or much more, shall the blood of Christ, offered by himself, "purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God," ver. 13, 14, is a legitimate comparison; because its terms are similar, both implying purification in a less or greater degree. Not so, to say, as the blood of beasts is *not effectual* even to the ceremonial purification of the flesh, *so* the blood of Christ is *effectual* to the absolute purification of the soul; because the terms are not similar, but contradictory. It is properly a contrast, not a comparison, thus: the one is *not* effectual, but the other is effectual. If the facts would justify it, we might properly say, the death of men is followed by a state of sinful-

ness and misery, in regard to vast multitudes, *but* the death of Christ is followed by absolute purity and happiness, "without sin unto salvation;" but to represent such consequences of death as similar, and to say that *as* is the one *so* is the other, is absurd. The comparison would be self-contradictory. If the "judgment" be actually rendered in the future life, the only interpretation consistent with the terms of the comparison would be, — *as* men die, and thenceforth are adjudged free from sin and misery, *so* Christ died, and was forever "without sin unto salvation." Thus interpreted, the comparison is legitimate; but, as popularly interpreted, its members "are not equal," or consistent with each other. See Prov. xxvi. 7. In my judgment, however, the passage should not be understood as descriptive of the future life, but as a comparison between the sacrifices offered by the Jewish priests and by our great High Priest, and between their respective results. Not only is this interpretation in accordance with the general theme, but even those who interpret differently acknowledge its accordance with the imagery of the comparison itself: For example:— "The design of the apostle is to represent to us what our Saviour did for us; and this he does under the character or image of the scape-goat. The scape-goat was to be presented before God, Lev. xvi. 7; and then the sins of the people were to be put upon the head of the goat, ver. 21, and the goat was to take and bear upon him all their iniquities into a land uninhabited. Ver. 22. In like manner our Saviour, *once offered* to God, shall take upon him our sins, and shall bear them away; or carry them away. Our sins shall no more be imputed to us, or to any that believe in Christ, than the sins of the Jews were to be imputed to them after the great day of expiation was over; nor could our sins hinder our eternal happiness, more than their breach of their law can be imputed to them to hinder their temporal happi-

time without sin unto salvation.

ness, after their sins were thus borne away."—*Sykes*. "I doubt not but there is indeed, as Limborch supposes, an allusion here to the high priest coming out to bless the people who were waiting for him in the temple, when the great day of atonement was over, and as he then appeared in his golden garments, whereas before he had officiated in the plain dress of a common priest, and as the trumpet of the jubilee on that year sounded to proclaim the commencement of that happy period, there is not perhaps an image that can enter into the mind of man more suitable to convey the grand idea which the apostle intended to convey by it, than this would be to a Jew, who well knew the grand solemnity to which it referred."—*Doddridge*. "The return of Christ from heaven to the earth at the last day is here compared to, and was typified by, the return of the high priest from the inward tabernacle. For after appearing there in the presence of God, and making atonement for the people in the plain dress of an ordinary priest, Lev. xvi. 23, 24, he came out, arrayed in his magnificent robes, to bless the people who waited for him in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. Now, as *Doddridge* observes, no image, for expressing the grand idea which the apostle intended to convey, could be presented more suitable than this would be to a Jew, who knew well the solemnity to which it referred. — The form in which the high priest and the ordinary priests were to bless the people, after burning the incense in the tabernacles is prescribed, Numb. vii. 23–26. And that they were in use to bless the people after they had burned the incense, we learn from Luke i. 8, where it is said, while Zacharias 'executed the priest's office before God, in the order of his course, 9. According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10. And the whole mul-

## CHAPTER X.

FOR the law having a shadow of good things to come,

titude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. 21. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple; 'they waited to receive from him the prescribed blessing.'—*Macknight*. "In Christ's coming, or appearing, the second time, it is very probable, as Dr. Doddridge and others have conjectured, that there is an allusion to the return of the high priest from the inner tabernacle."—*Clarke*. I only add that if the reappearance of Christ to announce salvation, after he had once entered heaven with "his own blood," "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," ver. 12, 24, 26, be compared with the reappearance of the high priest to announce absolution to the congregation, after he had once entered the holy place with the blood of the prescribed sacrifices, we may well suppose that his entrance into heaven, or his sacrificial death, when he "was once offered," is compared with the high priest's entrance into the holy place, when he had died by proxy, as required by the law. Thus interpreted, the passage harmonizes with the general theme of the discourse, and forms a fitting conclusion of the whole. Previously, Christ is represented as laboring, pouring out his blood, offering himself, to "obtain eternal redemption for us," even as the high priest offered the appointed sacrifices "for himself and for the errors of the people." But now, as the high priest, returning from the sanctuary, gave assurance to the people that the sacrifice was accepted, and that they were ceremonially cleansed, even so Christ shall reappear, to give assurance that his work is effectual, and that his people are made heirs of eternal salvation.

## CHAPTER X.

1. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image, &c. "Moreover, the law, which

and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 For it is not possible that

the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.

presented only an imperfect sketch of good things to come, and not a full representation of those things."—

*Stuart.* The reference is manifestly to the ritual or sacrificial law, which is so often mentioned in the previous chapters. ¶ *Can never with those sacrifices, &c.* The most to be expected from those sacrifices was a ceremonial cleansing, or "purifying of the flesh." Ch. ix. 13. Nothing could make men morally or spiritually perfect, or effectually "put away sin," but the influence of Christ's love, manifested by "the sacrifice of himself." Ch. ix. 26. This and what immediately follows may be regarded as confirming the declaration at the close of ch. ix., from which it is arbitrarily separated by the division of chapters.

2. *For then would they not have ceased, &c.* That is, they would have ceased to be offered. And the reason assigned is good and sufficient, namely, if the people were thoroughly cleansed from sin, they would "have had no more conscience of sins," or of any need of further sacrifices.

3. *There is a remembrance, &c.* The offering of sacrifices recognized the existence of sinfulness; and, by its repetition from year to year, the fact was brought to the remembrance of the people that they were not thoroughly purified from sinfulness by the previous sacrifices.

4. *For it is not possible, &c.* "The reference here is to the sacrifices which were made on the great day of atone-

ment, for on that day the blood of bulls and of goats alone was offered. — According to the divine arrangement, expiation was made by those sacrifices for offences of various kinds against the ritual law of Moses, and pardon for such offences was thus obtained. But the meaning here is, that there was no efficacy in the blood of a mere animal to wash away a moral offence. It could not repair the law; it could not do anything to maintain the justice of God; it had no efficacy to make the heart pure. The mere shedding of the blood of an animal never could make the soul pure."—*Barnes.*

5–7. *Wherefore.* This form of expression indicates an appeal to the Jewish Scriptures in proof of an assertion so opposite to the Jewish opinions concerning sacrifices. ¶ *When he cometh into the world.* It is generally agreed that the reference here is to the Messiah. ¶ *Sacrifice and offering, &c.* The quotation is from Psalm xl. 6–8, as the passage stands in the LXX. It differs from the Hebrew rather in form than in sense, as may be seen by comparing the language here with the corresponding passage, and remembering that faithful obedience or service is indicated in both forms of expression. Compare Exo. xxi. 5, 6; Deut. xv. 16, 17. The idea of a sacrifice is still preserved, and the one offering of Christ is represented as superior to all the "burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin," presented annually by the high

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12 But this man, after he

---

priest under the law. ¶ *Thou hast had no pleasure.* "I do not find that the ancient Jews interpreted these words of Christ in express terms, but they say enough to justify the apostle's argument from this text. For hence they conclude 'that God had no principal regard to sacrifices; and that obedience and praise was better than sacrifice,' and that 'a further salvation was to be expected, even the *salvation of God*,' Ps. l. 23; Isa. xlv. 17; which was an eternal salvation, or, in the language of the apostle here, salvation forever. Ch. vii. 25; x. 14." — *Whitby*.

8, 9. *Above when he said, &c.* See note on ver. 5-7. ¶ *He taketh away the first, &c.* The first covenant is superseded by the second; the Mosaic by the Christian. The idea is similar to that which is expressed in ch. viii. 13, and is here stated as "an inference drawn from the two declarations recited in the context immediately preceding." — *Stuart*.

10. *By the which will.* Namely, the will of God, ver. 9. ¶ *We are sanctified, &c.* See notes on ch. ix. 12, 14, 15, 26. The substance of the reasoning in ver. 5-10 is, that ritual sacrifices cannot remove the sinfulness of men, or make them holy; but the

had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

---

Divine Spirit manifested in the life, and teaching, and labors, of Christ, sealed and crowned by his voluntary offering of himself on the cross "once for all," is sufficient to "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14.

11, 12. *And every priest standeth daily, &c.* See notes on ch. ix. 25, 26. ¶ *Sat down on the right hand of God.* See notes on Acts ii. 33-36.

13. *Expecting.* Or, waiting, looking for the consummation of his work. ¶ *Till his enemies be made his footstool.* Ps. cx. 1. See notes on 1 Cor. xv. 25-28.

14. *For by one offering he hath perfected, &c.* There is no need that he should repeat what he has done. It was effectually done "once for all;" and herein appears one proof of his superiority to the Jewish priests. The entire result of his work doth not yet fully appear; but it is in progress, and the perfection of all who are sanctified, namely, all for whose benefit he tasted death, is certain. See notes on ch. ii. 8, 9.

15-17. *Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us.* "The witness of the Holy Ghost, here referred to, is that which is furnished in the Scriptures, and not any witness in ourselves.

18 Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And *having* a high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a

true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith, without wavering; for he *is* faithful that promised;

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assem-

Paul immediately makes his appeal to a passage of the Old Testament, and he thus shows his firm conviction that the Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Ghost." — *Barnes*. ¶ *This is the covenant, &c.* See notes on ch. viii. 8–12. Here, as before, the apostle quotes the language of the prophet, to show that the mission of Christ was designed not merely to secure conformity to external rites and ceremonies, but to purify the heart from sinfulness, so that all former offences should be blotted out or forgiven.

18. *Now where remission, &c.* The remission of sin here is equivalent to "redemption," or the "putting away of sin." Ch. ix. 12, 26. This having been accomplished, or made certain, there was no necessity of any more "offering for sin." "The idea of Paul is, that in the Jewish dispensation there was a constant repeating of the remembrance of sins by the sacrifices which were offered; but that in reference to the dispensation under the Messiah, sin would be entirely cancelled." — *Barnes*.

19–25. *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter, &c.* "Here ends the doctrinal part of the epistle, the remainder being occupied with admonitory, hortatory, and consolatory matter. And first the apostle proceeds to the practical application of the foregoing doctrines, exhorting his Hebrew readers to constancy in their Christian profession, warning them against apostasy, and pointing to its awful consequences; intermingling, however,

encouragement and promises, to excite them to strive for the prize of their high calling in Christ Jesus, by enduring unto the end. The general sense of ver. 19–25 is well expressed by Hammond and Whitby." — *Bloomfield*. "(19.) The doctrine, then, of the superlative excellence of Christ's priesthood above the Mosaic being thus evidenced, and the benefit of it being to us so great, even to give us liberty to approach unto God in prayer, and apprehension of his promises, to have title to heaven itself, through what Christ hath purchased for us. (20.) Which confidence and liberty to enter he hath helped us to by a way never known before, and that a clear or living way, in opposition to the dead shadows and rudiments under the law, which, I say, he hath helped us to, by passing himself from the outer to the inner tabernacle, from this life to another, breaking through the vail or partition between them, that is, through his flesh, being fain to die before he entered heaven; (21.) And having one that intercedes for us at the right hand of God, and that hath taken upon him the whole care of his church, and of every faithful servant of his that shall adhere and keep close to him: (22.) Let us serve and worship him unfeignedly, being filled with faith, and having reformed our wicked lives in sincere resolution of heart, — and having our actions washed and pure also. (23.) Let not all the afflictions and dangers that can approach us, move us so

bling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the

knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

much as to waver in our Christian profession, which having the hope of eternal life joined with it, is fortification enough against all the terrors of this world, having God's fidelity engaged to make good the promise to us. (24.) And let us weigh and consider all advantages that we can have upon one another, to provoke and excite one another to charity and all actions of piety (such as are joining in the public service, ver. 25), whensoever we see anything of fainting or growing cold in any. (25.) And not suffer ourselves to proceed so far toward defection, as to give over the public assemblies (the forsaking of which is not only deserting of the public profession of Christ, but also of the means of growth in grace), but stir up one another to the performance of this and such other duties of confession toward Christ, by this argument among others, that now their deliverance from the persecutions which so discouraged them is near at hand (by reason of the destruction of the enemies of the cross, the Jews and Gnostics, that have caused all these persecutions), which therefore would make it unreasonable for them now to give over their constancy, and lose all, when they are so near the end of their voyage. See Rom. xiii. 11, and Jas. v. 7, 8." — *Hammond*. "The day approaching (ver. 25), that is, the day of the Lord's coming to destroy the unbelieving Jews, and to execute his vengeance on them, for rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, styled by St. Luke *the days of vengeance*, ch. xxi. 22; the day of the Lord's coming, which who can bear? saith the prophet, Mal. iii. 2; the day burning like an oven; the day coming that shall so burn up them that do wickedly, as not to leave them root or

branch; the day of the Lord drawing near, when all the inhabitants of the earth shall tremble, Joel ii. 1; the great and terrible day of the Lord, ver. 11, 31, the day of the Son of man. That this is the meaning of the place will appear from the scope of the apostle, which is to terrify them he writes to, by the consideration of that dreadful day of vengeance threatened to the unbelieving Jews, not only by our Lord, but their own prophets, and now near at hand: as it follows from ver. 26 to ver. 32." — *Whitby*. "It was very natural that the more timid members of the church should shrink from frequenting the assembly of the congregation for worship, in a time of persecution. *The day of Christ's coming* was seen approaching at this time, by the threatening prelude of the great Jewish war, wherein he came to judge that nation." — *Conybeare*.

26, 27. *For if we sin wilfully*, &c. "The particular sin here spoken of is that of apostasy from the Christian faith, to which these Hebrew Christians were particularly tempted. See the whole of this passage from x. 26 to xii. 29." — *Conybeare*. "Now what is meant by *cutting off*? If you ask some, they will put a sense of their own upon the phrase, and tell you it means a cutting off or separating a person from the congregation and public assemblies, by excommunication. But ask the Jews, to and among whom the thing was spoken, what it means in their common speech and acceptance, and they will tell you, *cutting off* means *death by the hands of heaven*, death or destruction by the hand of God; interpreting the matter to this purpose, that, if a person sinned wilfully and presumptuously, there was no sin-offering allowed in that case; but the party so offending

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, where-

with he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

fell immediately under liableness to divine vengeance, to be destroyed, or cut off by the hand of heaven. And this interpretation of the phrase of *cutting off* the Apostle Paul doth justify in that passage (Heb. x. 26), 'If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment,' &c."—*Lightfoot*. "The circumstance, that several who still continued Christians forsook the places of public worship, x. 25, does not occur in any other epistle, and implies a general and continued persecution, which deterred the Christians from an open confession of their faith. Under these sufferings, the Hebrews are comforted by the promised coming of Christ, which they are to await with patience, as being not far distant, x. 25-38. This can be no other than the promised destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv.), of which Christ himself said, 'When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' Luke xxi. 28."—*Townsend*.

28, 29. *He that despised Moses' law died, &c.* By this reference to the Mosaic law, the apostle designed to convince his Hebrew readers that the retribution which awaited apostates from Christianity,—those who, through fear of persecution, renounced Christ, and joined with his enemies in representing him as an impostor and a malefactor,—was not excessive nor more severe than might be reasonably expected. In like manner, Paul admonished his Hebrew brethren in the Corinthian church, by the terrible judgments which befell their "fa-

thers" who transgressed in the wilderness. 1 Cor. x. 1-12. "And of this you may be assured from what befell those who revolted from the law of Moses; for he that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under the testimony of two or three witnesses of that apostasy. Numb. xv. 30, 31; Deut. xvii. 2-7. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, using him with the greatest contempt, and hath accounted the blood of the new covenant, wherewith he was sanctified or purged from the guilt of his sins, ch. ii. 11, and ix. 13, 14, and xiii. 12, an unholy thing, such as pollutes rather than purges, as being the blood of a malefactor, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace, by refusing to own him as the Spirit of God, yea, rejecting him as a lying spirit, and his gifts and miracles as illusions."—*Whitby*. Some forms of death are more terrible or grievous than others. Thus our Lord, in reference to this "sorer punishment" which awaited apostates, calls it "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Matt. xxiv. 21. Others had died, from the "beginning of the world," and many had been cut off for their sins, but none had been such conspicuous examples of divine vengeance.

30. *Vengeance belongeth unto me, &c.* The language here quoted from the Old Testament is found in Deut. xxxii. 35, 36, where the context clearly indicates such a destruction of life as awaited the apostates here referred to by the apostle. See note on Rom. xii. 19.

31. *It is a fearful thing, &c.* In an

31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

important sense, we are always in "the hands of the living God," "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28. As here used, however, the phrase indicates the terrible divine retribution of which the apostle speaks in the previous verses. Yet, even in those awful judgments which involve the destruction of life, we should remember the prudence and good judgment of David, when required to choose between seven years of famine, three months of flight before a pursuing enemy, or three days of pestilence: "David said, I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man." 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, 14. Believing that God is our Father, and that he chastises us for our own good, we may confide in him, even when suffering the sharpest discipline, and say, in the language of Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Job xiii. 15.

32-35. *But call to remembrance, &c.* The meaning of this passage is sufficiently obvious in the following paraphrase: "Call to remembrance what happened not long since, when ye were first enlightened by the truth of the gospel. Our Lord himself always declared to his disciples, that in this world they would have tribulation, and you find it to be true; for, ever since your conversion, you have been forced to go through a great struggle, and to bear all sorts of sufferings; (33.) Partly whilst ye were exposed, as upon a

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and

theatre, to open reproaches, and to all the uneasiness thence arising to yourselves; and partly whilst you were sharers in the evils of those who were under such distresses, when ye felt so much as you did on their accounts. (34.) For ye felt great uneasiness and anxiety on my account, when I was in chains for the gospel's sake; and when ye were plundered of your goods, for your profession of the truth as it is in Christ, ye took it not only patiently, but with pleasure, as knowing that ye have laid up for you in heaven much greater goods, and which will last forever, which it is not in the power of man to dispossess you of. (35.) Cast not away, therefore, the liberty you have through Christ to approach God, which has certainly great recompense of reward." — *Sykes*. The general idea is, — you have heretofore endured persecution, and God has preserved you. Confide in him still for protection against the evil designs of your adversaries. Apostasy, though it give promise of safety, is more dangerous than an open profession of faith in Christ. See ver. 39.

36. *For ye have need of patience, &c.* This verse may be regarded as equivalent to Matt. x. 22: "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Those who held fast their integrity unto the end, and followed the instructions of Christ, escaped the utter destruction which overwhelmed thousands of the unbelieving Jews. See notes on Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13.

37. *For yet a little while, &c.* Their



he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition;

patience would not be put to a much longer test. Within a very few years after this epistle was written, the judgment, so plainly predicted, was executed. "As Christ's pouring down his vengeance in the destruction of that city and people is called his 'coming in glory,' and his 'coming in judgment,' and as the destruction of that city and nation is characterized in Scripture as the destruction of the whole world, so there are several passages that speak of the nearness of that destruction, that are suited according to such characters. Such is that in 1 Cor. x. 11, 'Upon us the ends of the world are come;' 1 Pet. iv. 7, 'The end of all things is at hand;' Heb. x. 37, 'Yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.'" — *Lightfoot*. "This coming is to be understood of the advent of Christ, to destroy Jerusalem, and put an end to the Jewish state." — *Bloomfield*.

38. *Now the just shall live by faith, &c.* This phrase is elsewhere used in a more general sense. See note on Rom. i. 17. Here the context limits its application to a notable distinction very soon to be made between the just and the unjust, between faithful disciples and apostates. See note on ver. 39.

39. *But we are not of them, &c.* The hope is expressed, that the Hebrew Christians will not apostatize and be destroyed with the unbelievers. See ch. vi. 9, where a similar idea is expressed. "We do not abandon our religion, moved by fear of calamities, but constantly confess it. *Περαιτέσις ψυχῆς*, possession of life, happiness, safety; for to possess life often indicates the enjoyment of happiness." — *Rosenmüller*. "Preservation, a saving of life." — *Robinson*. "But we are not they who

but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

## CHAPTER XI.

NOW faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

withdraw unto destruction, but who faithfully persevere, to the deliverance of our lives." — *Wakefield*. "Many passages in this epistle to the Hebrews relate solely, as I think, to the visitation of the Jews, foretold in Matt. xxiv. Or, however, if not solely, yet to that catastrophe, in conjunction with other events that were conceived to be contiguous to it in point of time. However, beyond that time these passages do not look; neither those in St. Paul's undoubted epistles, nor those in this epistle to the Hebrews. — The whole of ch. x., to me, manifestly speaks of that visitation, and in terms which, though they are different from those in which St. Paul speaks of that event in the 2d of Thessalonians, at the beginning, have yet a considerable resemblance thereto." — *Cappe*. "But as Christ told his disciples, that in times of persecution he that would save his life should be the most likely to lose it, and he that would venture the utmost for Christ's sake, should be most likely to thrive and secure himself, even in this world, so it is likely to be at this time," &c. — *Hammond*. See note on Matt. xvi. 25.

## CHAPTER XI.

1. *Now faith is the substance, &c.* "I said that the just shall live by faith, and that we are men of faith (ch. x. 38, 39), and you may ask what it is that I mean by the word. I mean by it a firm persuasion of the mind that we shall enjoy those good things we hope for; it is a full conviction that we shall receive what we cannot at present see. It is the *basis* and *ground-work* upon which we act in all cases where we *hope* for anything; it is the argument that leads us to act,

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

in cases where we do not see what we would have."—*Sykes*.

2. *For by it the elders obtained a good report.* Some suppose that by *elders* the apostle intended the aged men, or the presbyters, of the Christian church, who had made proof of their faith and perseverance in the midst of persecution. The more general and probably the more accurate opinion is, that the apostle referred to the patriarchs, and other eminent servants of God, who in former ages had exemplified the power of faith. In the remainder of this chapter, what is here affirmed generally is illustrated in detail.

3. *Through faith we understand, &c.* "The first instance of the strength of faith which the apostle refers to is that by which we give credence to the declarations in the Scriptures about the work of creation. Gen. i. 1. This is selected first, evidently because it is the first thing that occurs in the Bible, or is the first thing there narrated in relation to which there is the exercise of faith. If this vast universe has been called into existence by the mere word of God, there is nothing which we may not believe he has ample power to perform."—*Barnes*. Others, with apparently good reason, interpret differently. "By faith we understand that the ages were adapted or fitted by the word of God, that is, by his command or direction, suited to their proper ends. Ages are certain periodical revolutions of time, ranged or put into proper successive order, so as best to suit the purposes of God. First, there was an age from Adam to the flood; a second was the patriarchal age to the law; a third was the age of the law to Christ. — It was true of all those ages, what is particularly remarked concerning several of the

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was trans-

patriarchs, that good men died in faith, not having received the promises, but, having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them. St. Paul uses the same expression, Eph. iii. 9, 11; Col. i. 26. See also ch. i. 2. The several respective ages were so ordered by God, that the things which are now seen should be brought about from things which did not appear. It was so contrived, that Christ's coming into the world, which we see, was brought about by means which could not be seen. The fact is unquestionable; and no doubt God ordered things past and gone in such manner as best to attain his ends."—*Sykes*.

4. *By faith Abel offered, &c.* See Gen. iv. 3-7. "On what account the sacrifice of Abel was more acceptable, commentators have speculated much, and assigned a great variety of causes. But, it may be asked, does not our text contain a solution of the question? Abel made his offering in *faith*; the implication is that Cain did not, and therefore it was not accepted."—*Stuart*. ¶ *God testifying, &c.* Some suppose by fire, as in 1 Kings xviii. 24, 38; but this is only supposition. It is sufficient that in some manner he produced the distinct impression on the heart of Abel. ¶ *He being dead yet speaketh.* By his example, encouraging the hearts of men to trust in God, and to offer him the sacrifice of penitent and loving hearts. The marginal reading, "is yet spoken of," is less expressive, and is generally regarded as less correct.

5. *By faith Enoch was translated, &c.* See Gen. v. 21-24. The tradition of the Jews that Enoch passed from earth to heaven without enduring death is confirmed by the apostle. It

lated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he

condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city

---

is reasonable to suppose him to have been an early example of what the apostle describes as a general process at the consummation of earthly affairs: "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment," &c. 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. ¶ *He had this testimony.* Satisfactory and convincing to him, though we know not how. See note on ver. 4.

6. *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* The apostle had asserted that Enoch "pleased God," ver. 5; and this was an evidence that he exercised faith, for otherwise he could not have pleased God. No man can truly worship God without faith in his existence, and confidence in his justice, as the following words declare. ¶ *For he that cometh to God, &c.* True worship and obedience imply a belief that *God is*, and that he administers his government upon just principles.

7. *By faith Noah, &c.* See the history, recorded in Gen. vi. 13-viii. 22.

8. *By faith Abraham, &c.* For the facts mentioned in ver. 8-12, see Gen. xii.-xviii. "Abraham was called to go into a land which God promised to show him. What land that was did not appear till after he had travelled to Canaan; and then God assured him that *that* was the land which he designed to give him. So that he

---

went out from his father's house purely upon the principle of *faith* in God, not knowing whither he went." — *Sykes.*

9. *Heirs with him of the same promise.* "That is, the promise was made to Abraham and his seed. What was not fulfilled in *him* was to have its accomplishment in *them*. Hence, fellow-heirs, joint-possessors, namely, with Abraham; the same promise being made to them as to him, respecting the land of Canaan and their future prosperity." — *Stuart.* Some understand the *promise* here to indicate the possession of Canaan, or, at the most, merely temporal blessings. Others, more properly, I think, understand it in a larger sense, as in ch. vi. 12-20.

10. *For he looked for a city.* Some commentators suppose a permanent earthly residence is intended, in contrast with the wandering life indicated by "dwelling in tabernacles." I prefer another interpretation: — "The meaning of the whole verse evidently is, that Abraham looked for a permanent abode in the heavenly country; that is, his hopes and expectations were placed upon the world to come." — *Stuart.* "Phrases like that of 'the city of God,' 'a city with foundations,' 'the new Jerusalem,' and 'the heavenly Jerusalem,' in the time of the apostle, appear to have acquired a

which hath foundations whose builder and maker *is* God.

11 Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of

*them* and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

17 By faith Abraham, when

---

kind of technical signification. They referred to heaven, of which Jerusalem, the seat of the worship of God, seems to have been regarded as the emblem." — *Barnes*. See ch. xii. 22; xiii. 14.

11. *Through faith also Sarah, &c.* See Gen. xvii. 15–22; xviii. 9–15; x. 1–8; and notes on Rom. iv. 16–22.

12. *As the stars of the sky, &c.* "The phrases here used are often employed to denote a vast multitude, as nothing appears more numerous than the stars of heaven, or than the sands that lie on the shores of the ocean. The strength of faith, in this case, was, that there was simple confidence in God, in the fulfilment of a promise where all human probabilities were against it. This is, therefore, an illustration of the nature of faith." — *Barnes*. Abraham and Sarah believed that "with God all things are possible." Matt. xix. 26.

13. *These all died in faith, &c.* Namely, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, before named. Enoch cannot well be included, because it appears that he did "not see death," ver. 5; and the *promises* were not so distinctly made to Abel and Noah as to Abraham and his posterity. ¶ *Not having received the promises.* Rather, the *prom-*

---

*ised blessings.* The promises were given to them with great distinctness and solemnity. They *embraced* these promises, being *persuaded* of their truth, and "died in faith" that they would be fulfilled.

14. *For they that say such things, &c.* That is, those who confessed "that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," ver. 13, plainly declared "that they seek a country," a "heavenly" habitation, ver. 16. See note on ver. 10.

15, 16. *And truly, if they had been mindful, &c.* If they had valued their temporal possessions more highly than the promise of spiritual blessings, they might have returned to their former habitations. "At the time referred to, when they confessed that they were strangers and sojourners, they showed that they sought a better country than the one which they had left. They lived as if they had no expectation of a permanent residence on earth, and were looking to another world. The argument of the apostle here appears to be based on what is apparent from the whole history, that they had a confident belief that the land of Canaan would be given to their posterity, but as for themselves they had no expectation of permanently dwelling there, but looked to a home in the

he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

20 By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the

sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to

---

heavenly country." — *Barnes*. ¶ *He hath prepared for them a city*. That is, a heavenly residence, a home in heaven. See note on ver. 10.

17-19. *By faith Abraham, &c.* Another instance is mentioned of the undoubting faith of Abraham, which enabled him unhesitatingly to obey God, and to prepare to sacrifice the son of his old age, though he saw no way in which the promise — "in Isaac shall thy seed be called" — could be fulfilled, except by an immediate and literal resurrection from the dead. And the miraculous preservation of Isaac was equivalent to such a resurrection; for his father devoted him to death, and "received him in a figure" back to life again, being convinced, by a miraculous interposition, that God did not require his immolation. The particulars are related in Gen. xxii. 1-19.

20. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, &c.* See Gen. xxvii. 26-40. By advice of his mother, Jacob attempted to deprive Esau of all share in the paternal blessing. Gen. xxvii. 1-25. But Isaac would not entirely abandon his first-born son; and he pronounced on him also a blessing, confiding in God that both his sons should share the divine favor. What he predicted for them was out of the common course of events, and not within the limits of human probability; but he felt the promptings of

the spirit, and he had faith in the prompter.

21. *By faith Jacob, &c.* See Gen. xlviii. 1-22. He announced a double portion to Joseph through his sons. This announcement was the result exclusively of faith, for there were no present indications of such an event. ¶ *And worshipped, &c.* Worshipped the God of his fathers, in whom he trusted. See Gen. xlvii. 31, where we find the phrase "bed's head," instead of "top of his staff." It is said that the original word means simply the *head*, or the *top*, of anything; and the form in which the apostle quotes the phrase is considered more natural than the translation in the Old Testament.

22. *By faith Joseph, when he died, &c.* That is, when he was about to die. Through faith that God would establish the Israelites in the promised land, according to his word, Joseph charged them to take his bones with them. Gen. i. 24, 25.

23. *By faith Moses.* The personal faith of Moses is mentioned in the following verses. The faith of his parents is here referred to, which induced them to hide him, lest his life should be destroyed by order of the king, whose commandment they disobeyed at the peril of life. Exo. ii. 1-4. ¶ *A proper child.* A goodly child; a beautiful child.

24. *When he was come to years.*

be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured,

as seeing him who is invisible.

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians as saying to do were drowned.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab

When he became a man. ¶ *Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.* The daughter of Pharaoh had found Moses among the rushes, had adopted and educated him as a son, so that he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Exo. ii. 10; Acts vii. 21, 22. Yet, afterwards, he forsook the court, and identified himself with his brethren in bondage. Exo. ii. 11-14.

25, 26. These "verses show the extent and consequence of the sacrifice; Moses being represented as abandoning the wealth, luxury, and sinful pleasures of a court,—then the wealthiest, and most magnificent, though the most corrupt, in the world,—for the oppression and insult which, when he professed himself an Israelite, he must have to encounter."—*Bloomfield.*

¶ *The recompense of reward.* The deliverance of his brethren from bondage and their establishment in the promised land were regarded by Moses as an abundant reward for all his personal sacrifices and labors. For the sake of this, he was willing to forego all the advantages of his position at court, and to brave the resentment of the king himself.

27. *By faith he forsook Egypt, &c.* Some suppose this to refer to the flight of Moses into Midian, after he had slain an Egyptian. Exo. ii. 11-15. But it is more probable that his departure into the wilderness at the head of the assembled host of his brethren in bondage is intended.

"The place alluded to is, 'Pharaoh said to him, get thee from me; take heed to thyself; see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face, thou shalt die!' Exo. x. 28, 29. Moses, not afraid of the king's threats, persevered, and strengthened himself, as if the invisible Being who governs all had been immediately present, even to his eyesight."—*Sykes.*

28. *Through faith he kept the passover, &c.* See Exo. xii. 1-30. He believed God and obeyed his word, notwithstanding there was no visible connection between "the sprinkling of blood," and the preservation of the children of Israel when the first-born of Egypt perished.

29. *By faith they passed through the Red Sea, &c.* Exo. xiv. 15-31. Moses had faith in God that he would preserve his people; and similar faith was inspired in the hearts of his brethren.

30. *By faith the walls of Jericho fell, &c.* Joshua vi. 20. Joshua and his companions exercised faith that the walls of Jericho should be shaken down by superhuman power; and they trustingly marched around the city, and blew their horns, and shouted, according to the command, notwithstanding they could see no connection between what they were commanded to do and the promised result.

31. *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not, &c.* Joshua ii. 1-22; vi. 17, 22-

perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought right-

eousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not ac-

25. "She believed in the God of Israel, who had done so great things for his people; and therefore she entertained the spies that were sent to search the land. She had heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for them, and what they had done to the two kings of the Amorites; and she believed that the God of Israel was the true God of heaven. Josh. ii. 10, 11." — *Sykes*. Though she had been immoral, and is here styled by an opprobrious name, yet we may well suppose she reformed, as she became the lawful wife of the Jewish prince, Salmon, and the mother of Boaz and of a long line of kings. Matt. i. 5.

32. *And what shall I more say? &c.* I have not time to enumerate all the examples of faith which authentic history records; and why need I specify any others? ¶ *Gideon*. See Judges vi.—viii. ¶ *Barak*. See Judges iv. 6–24. ¶ *Samson*. See Judges xiv.—xvi. ¶ *Jephthah*. See Judges xi., xii. ¶ *David*. Celebrated in Jewish history, as one of the most powerful and just kings. ¶ *Samuel*. An eminent prophet and servant of God, whose deeds are recorded in the first twenty-four chapters of the first book bearing his name. ¶ *The prophets*. The reference seems to be general, and to include all the Jewish prophets, whether particularly named here or not.

33, 34. *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, &c.* "That is, those specified in the previous verses, and others like them. The meaning is, that some of them subdued kingdoms, others obtained promises, &c. Thus, Joshua

subdued the nations of Canaan; Gideon, the Midianites; Jephthah, the Amorites; David, the Philistines, Amalekites, Jebusites, Edomites, &c."

— *Barnes*. ¶ *Obtained promises*. Obtained promised blessings through faith in Him who promised. ¶ *Stopped the mouth of lions*. Daniel was a notable example. See Dan. vi. 1–23.

¶ *Quenched the violence of fire*. Were preserved in the midst of fire, unharmed; as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Dan. iii. 13–30. ¶ *Waxed valiant in fight*. Like those already named, and similar brave men, who "out of weakness were made strong" through faith in the protection of the God of hosts.

35. *Women received their dead raised to life again*. Such as the woman of Zarephath, whose son was reanimated by Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 17–24, and the Shunamite mother, whose son was restored to life by Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 18–37. ¶ *Not accepting deliverance*. That is, at the expense of their fidelity; they would not renounce their faith to escape from torture. ¶ *A better resurrection*. "Better than what? Plainly, better than that which had just been mentioned, namely, resurrection to life in the present world merely; as in the examples of the children mentioned in 1 Kings xvii. and 2 Kings iv. It was not the hope of such a resurrection,—the hope of merely regaining the present life and being again subject to death as before,—which led the martyrs to refuse liberation. It was the hope of a resurrection to a life of immortal happiness and glory that led them to refuse liberation." — *Stuart*.

cepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 Of whom the world was

36-38. *And others had trial, &c.* In these verses the apostle groups together many forms of suffering endured by the servants of God, as trials of their faith. They drew not back unto perdition, but saved their souls, or escaped the destruction which overwhelmed the apostates and unbelievers. See note on ch. x. 39. Their faithfulness is commended as an example worthy of imitation.

39. *Obtained a good report.* They were approved of God, and honored by men. See notes on ver. 4, 5. ¶ *Received not the promise.* Did not receive the blessing promised, or did not enter into its full fruition. See note on ver. 13.

40. *God having provided some better thing, &c.* "An exceedingly difficult verse, about the meaning of which there have been a multitude of conjectures. The only ones that deserve particular regard are, that the *better thing* refers to the Messiah; or that it refers to the happiness of the heavenly world. In the latter sense, some very respectable interpreters take it. But how is heavenly blessedness vouchsafed to later more than to ancient saints? And in what sense can it be affirmed that the ancients could not, or did not, attain it without us?—I must therefore adopt another exegesis of the whole passage, which refers *ἐπαγγελίαν* to the promised blessing of the Messiah. See Gen. xii. 1-3; xvii. 1-8. I construe the whole passage, then, in this man-

ner. The ancient worthies persevered in their faith although the Messiah was known to them only by *promise*. We are under greater obligations than they to persevere; for God has fulfilled his promise respecting the Messiah, and thus placed us in a condition better adapted to perseverance than theirs. So much is our condition preferable to theirs, that we may even say, without the blessing which we enjoy, their happiness could not be completed."—

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

## CHAPTER XII.

WHEREFORE, seeing we also are compassed

ner. The ancient worthies persevered in their faith although the Messiah was known to them only by *promise*. We are under greater obligations than they to persevere; for God has fulfilled his promise respecting the Messiah, and thus placed us in a condition better adapted to perseverance than theirs. So much is our condition preferable to theirs, that we may even say, without the blessing which we enjoy, their happiness could not be completed."—*Stuart*.

## CHAPTER XII.

1. *Wherefore.* "Having pointed out the nature, and shown by examples the efficacy, of faith, the apostle now proceeds to exhort his Hebrew readers to bring the same principle into action in the Christian faith; inculcating steadfast perseverance even under the greatest trials, and comforting them with the assurance that the evils they were then suffering were not marks of God's wrath, but rather paternal chastisements, intended for their good in the end."—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *So great a cloud of witnesses.* Such a multitude of witnesses. By a bold figure of speech, the apostle represents the ancient worthies of whom he had spoken in the previous chapter, as spectators, witnessing the manner in which his brethren performed their Christian duties, which here, as in his epistle to the Corinthians, he describes in terms



about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

2 Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that en-

drawn from the Grecian games. ¶ *Let us lay aside every weight, &c.* "The reference here is to those who ran in the stadium, and who laid aside all superfluous clothing, and disencumbered themselves of everything which could impede their progress. The ἀναγρία which most easily beset the Hebrews, was undoubtedly apostasy, or defection from their Christian profession; against which the whole epistle is directed. They were under peculiar temptations to this sin, in consequence of the persecutions which they endured, and of their former prejudices in favor of Judaism. — The simple meaning of the whole verse, divested of metaphor, is, since so many illustrious patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs, who preceded us, have exercised faith, persevered in it, and obtained the rewards consequent upon it, let us, in like manner, rejecting every solicitation to renounce our hopes and our holy religion, persevere in the belief and in the duties which the gospel requires." — Stuart.

2. *Looking unto Jesus.* The apostle here presents to his brethren, for their encouragement, a more perfect example of faith in God and perseverance in the performance of duty, even at the cost of life. Matt. xxvi. 39; John xii. 27. ¶ *The author and finisher of our faith.* "The word *our* is not in the original here, and obscures the sense. The meaning is, he is the first and last as an example of faith, or of confidence in God, occupying in

dured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth

this, as in all other things, the pre-eminence, and being the most complete model that can be placed before us." — Barnes. ¶ *Who for the joy that was set before him, &c.* To obey God, and to promote the welfare of mankind, afforded the highest joy to our Lord Jesus Christ. John iv. 34; vi. 38, 39; Rom. v. 8; Heb. ii. 9. ¶ *Right hand of God.* Exalted to the highest station of honor, next to God himself. See 1 Cor. xv. 24–28.

3. *For consider him, &c.* Remember what opposition, contumely, and sharp persecution our Lord endured, and yet remained faithful. Copy his example, and neither faint nor be discouraged.

4. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, &c.* Our Lord remained faithful unto death; your trials have not yet been so severe, and you have no good excuse for apostasy. "If this epistle was addressed to the Christians of Jerusalem, the writer speaks here only of the existing generation; for the Church of Jerusalem had resisted unto blood formerly, in the persons of Stephen, James the Greater, and James the Less." — Conybeare.

5. *And ye have forgotten the exhortation, &c.* See Prov. iii. 11. ¶ *Despise not, &c.* Do not disregard the discipline which the Lord administers. ¶ *Nor faint.* Be not discouraged. What you suffer is designed for your good. Ver. 6–13.

6. *For whom the Lord loveth, &c.* See Prov. iii. 12. Chastisement is an

he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had

---

evidence of the Father's love to his children, not of his wrath. He designs their good, not their harm.

7. *God dealeth with you as with sons, &c.* "He does not cast you off, and regard you as if you were in no way related to him." — *Barnes*.

8. *But if ye be without chastisement, &c.* "The meaning is, if ye are not dealt with as all legitimate children are, it would follow that ye are considered as not belonging to them. That is, if ye receive no chastening, then God does not acknowledge you as his spiritual children. The design of the writer, in thus applying this text of Scripture, is plain. He means to tell the Hebrews, that, so far from being disheartened by their trials and afflictions, on account of their Christian profession, they ought to regard it as a matter of encouragement, and an evidence that God is acknowledging by these their filial relation to him." — *Stuart*.

9. *Fathers of our flesh, &c.* Earthly parents. We have submitted to punishment administered by them, because we believed they loved us. ¶ *Shall we not much rather, &c.* Shall we not confide in God's love even more fully than in the love of earthly parents? A good earthly father will not give a stone to his son who asks for bread; much more will God bestow what his children truly need. Matt. vii. 9-11. It is safer to trust in God than in man.

10. *After their own pleasure.* However much earthly parents love their children, they sometimes administer

fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joy-

---

chastisement arbitrarily, to gratify their own passions rather than to benefit their children. Not so the Father of our spirits. ¶ *But he for our profit.* "Never from passion, from caprice, from the love of power or superiority, but always for our good. The exact benefit which he designs to produce we may not be able always to understand, but we may be assured that no other cause influences him than a desire to promote our real welfare, and as he can never be mistaken in regard to the proper means to secure that, we may be assured that our trials are always adapted to that end." — *Barnes*. ¶ *That we might be partakers of his holiness.* That we might forsake sin, and become holy. See notes on ver. 11, and Tit. ii. 12.

11. *Now no chastening, &c.* Chastisement is always painful or *grievous*, while it continues. ¶ *Afterward, &c.* Its profitable results are experienced after the pain ceases. By chastisement, we are warned that sin is hurtful, and are induced to abandon our evil ways, to break off our transgressions by righteousness, and to turn unto God, in whom is life. If, as the apostle asserts, though chastisement be painful while it endures, "nevertheless, *afterward*, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby," then it is absurd to suppose that such chastisement is without end, — unless we suppose, which is equally incredible, that God will inflict endless pain and grief on those who are "partakers of his holiness," ver. 10; and in whom

ous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths

for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of

"the peaceable fruit of righteousness" has been produced through the discipline he has administered. As he designs to benefit his children by what he causes them to suffer, and as he will infallibly secure that result, we may well confide in him as our best Friend, and patiently endure the discipline which he administers. What is generally true, the apostle commends to the special attention of his brethren who were in danger of apostasy on account of persecution. He desired them to consider that God was their Father, and that he would suffer no evil thing to befall them except such as he would overrule for their highest good.

12, 13. *Wherefore lift up the hands, &c.* "The persecutions and troubles which the Christians at first met with were such as shook their courage and made them faint in their Christian race. The apostle therefore encourages them to exert themselves, and not to be dead-hearted and languid, as if they had no strength either in their hands or knees. Push on, as men that may be more than conquerors. Go straight on, and do not bend out of the straight course of virtue and goodness. Follow your leader Jesus Christ in the one path of holiness; and do not you give occasion, by any wrong steps of yours, that such as halt, or doubt what they ought to do in these times of danger, should fall away or forsake Christ. But rather so act with steadiness and constancy, that their doubts may be removed, and they encouraged to persevere and to keep firm in the faith."—*Sykes*.

14. *Follow peace with all men.* In the midst of persecutions, the Hebrew Christians were in danger of becoming

embittered against their adversaries. The apostle cautions them rather to imitate their Master, who loved and prayed for his enemies. Luke xxiii.

34. ¶ *And holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* This "is a Hebrew expression, and signifies to enjoy; therefore, to see God is to enjoy him, and to have some special union and communication with him, and derive some happiness from him, either by grace in this life, and glory in the life to come. By holiness we may see and enjoy him; and according to the measure of our holiness is the measure of our enjoyments. The more holy we are, the nearer fellowship we have with him, and derive more joy and comfort from him."—*Lawson*. See note on Matt. v. 8.

15. *Lest any man fail of the grace of God.* See note on ch. iv. 1. The apostle points out the dangerous results of apostasy, whether induced by the evil examples of others, or by a desire to secure immunity from persecution, at the expense of a good conscience. See note on ver. 25. ¶ *Root of bitterness, &c.* "Any bitter root. There is doubtless an allusion here to Deut. xxix. 18. The allusion there is to those who were idolators, and who, instead of bearing the fruits of righteousness and promoting the piety and happiness of the nation, would bear the fruits of idolatry and spread abroad irreligion and sin. The reference of the apostle is to some person who should produce a similar effect in the church; to one who should inculcate false doctrines; or who should apostatize; or who should lead an unholly life, and thus be the means of corrupting and destroying others."—*Barnes*.

God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be

touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.

16. *Lest there be any fornicator.* The word *πόρνος* is often applied in the Old Testament to apostates from the worship of God to idolatry. But it may be understood here "as designating any person who indulges in gross and sensual pleasures, or who is of an abandoned character. So our Saviour often speaks of the Jews as a wicked and adulterous generation; not literally adulterous (although doubtless this was true of some), but adulterous in the figurative sense of the word, namely, sensual, vicious, abandoned, profligate." — *Stuart*. ¶ *Or profane person, as Esau, &c.* Esau is called profane, because he slighted the blessing promised to the seed of Abraham. As the eldest son of Isaac he was entitled to a double portion of the inheritance in the promised land, as well as of his father's present possessions, and to patriarchal supremacy over his brother Jacob. But so addicted was he to sensual indulgence, that, rather than endure the temporary inconvenience of hunger, he bartered all these privileges for a "morsel of meat," or a mess of "pottage." The history of this transaction is recorded in Gen. xxv. 29-34. By this example the apostle warns his brethren not to sacrifice their Christian privileges by apostatizing in hope of escaping present sufferings.

17. *He was rejected, &c.* Although Esau bitterly repented his folly, when he perceived its consequences, he could

not prevail on his father to reverse the blessing pronounced on Jacob, or the predictions concerning himself. All his supplications for such reversal were *rejected*. See Gen. xxvii. 30-40. "Reprobated; this is not to be understood of endless reprobation, which closes up the way of celestial happiness, but of temporal reprobation, by reason of which he could not prevail on his father to revoke the blessing which he had bestowed on Jacob, though he sought it with tears." — *Calmet*. "He was reprobated; not by God, but by his father, who, when he knew that he had given the blessing to Jacob, refused to retract it, being sensible, from his inward feelings, that he had spoken prophetically, and that God would him to give the blessing to Jacob." — *Macknight*. ¶ *He found no place of repentance.* "Repentance: here *μετανοία* is not to be taken in a theological sense, as implying contrition for sin, but merely change of mind or purpose; nor does the word here refer to Esau at all, but to his father, whom Esau could not, with all his tears and entreaties, persuade to reverse what he had done. *I have blessed him*, said he, *yea, and he must be blessed*; I cannot reverse it now. Nothing spoken here by the apostle, nor in the history in Genesis to which he refers, concerns the eternal state of either of the two brothers." — *Clarke*.

18-24. *For ye are not come, &c.* The general design of this passage has

21 And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the

been well stated, thus: "To enforce the considerations already urged, the apostle introduces this sublime comparison between the old and new dispensations, ver. 18-24. The object, in accordance with the principal scope of the epistle, is to guard them against apostasy. To do this, he shows that under the new dispensation there was much more to bind them to fidelity, and to make apostasy dangerous, than there was under the old. The main point of the comparison is, that, under the Jewish dispensation, everything was adapted to awe the mind, and to restrain by the exhibition of grandeur and of power; but that, under the Christian dispensation, while there was as much that was sublime, there was much more that was adapted to win and hold the affections. There were revelations of higher truths. There were more affecting motives to lead to obedience. The considerations presented in this passage constitute the climax of the argument so beautifully pursued through this epistle, showing that the Christian system was far superior in every respect to the Jewish. In presenting this closing argument, the apostle first refers to some of the circumstances attending the former dispensation, which were designed to keep the people of God from apostasy, and then the considerations of superior weight existing under the Christian economy." — *Barnes*. ¶ *The mount that might be touched, &c.* Mount Sinai. The events which are here grouped together by the apostle are recorded in Gen. xix. 10-20. ¶ *Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.* This language is not found in the Old Testament. It may have been preserved by tradition, or communicated to Paul by revelation. We

may confidently accept his testimony to the fact. ¶ *Mount Zion, &c.* This language is to be understood figuratively. "In the Christian dispensation, they have all immediate access to the city of God: they are registered as citizens, and have the privileges of the heavenly Jerusalem granted to them immediately upon their belief in Christ. — They were entitled to the privileges of heaven, in what part soever of the world they might live."

— *Sykes*. ¶ *Church of the first-born.* Christians are styled the *first-born* or *first fruits* of divine grace, James i. 18.

¶ *Just men made perfect.* "If I understand aright the scope of the apostle in the argument he is upon, he speaks of just men who are still in this life, and shows that the souls and spirits of believers are made perfectly righteous by faith, contrary to what the Jews held, that men were complete in their righteousness by works, even bodily works." — *Lightfoot*. ¶ *Mediator of the new covenant.* See note on ch. viii. 6. ¶ *Blood of sprinkling.* See notes on ch. ix. 12-14. ¶ *Better things, &c.* The blood of Abel is represented as crying for vengeance, Gen. iv. 10. The blood of Christ was freely poured out as an evidence of God's love to his sinful children, and as a pledge that all needful blessings will be added. Rom. v. 8; viii. 32. "Such is the contrast between the former and latter dispensation. *There* all is awful, terrible, and threatening; *here*, all is alluring, gracious, and animating. Who now can adhere to the former, and renounce the latter? Such is the nature of the argument presented by the writer. He next proceeds to warn the Hebrews, in the most solemn and affectionate manner, against a renunciation of their Chris-

blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath

promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace,

tian faith." — *Stuart*. They were sorely tempted to relapse into Judaism. See note at the beginning of ch. v.

25-29. See that ye refuse not, &c. The following paraphrase is judicious: — (25.) "And therefore be sure ye despise not Christ, who is come to deliver God's will unto you; for if they were destroyed that contemned Moses that delivered the law from Mount Sinai, then much severer destruction is to be expected for them that despise the commandments of Christ that delivers them immediately from heaven. (26.) In giving the law, there was an earthquake when God spake, and that was somewhat terrible; but now is the time of fulfilling that prophecy, Hag. ii. 7, where God professes to make great changes, greater than ever were among them before, even to the destroying the whole state of the Jews. See Matt. xxiv. (27.) For that is the notation of the phrase which is rendered *yet once*, which signifies some final ruin, and that very remarkable, as here the total subversion of the Jews, of all their law and policy, as of things that were made on purpose to be destroyed, designed by God only for a time for that imperfect state, as a forerunner and preparative to the gospel, which therefore is a state of which there is no mention of the shaking it, nor consequently of any other future state that shall succeed it, which signifies that that is most certainly to endure forever, till the end of the world. (28.) We therefore that

are vouchsafed our part in this immutable kingdom or state under Christ, a condition that no persecutions nor even the gates of hell shall prevail against, but it shall be sure finally to overcome and survive all opposition, let us take care to hold fast and not forsake the gospel, through which we may serve God so as he will now accept of, with reverence of so glorious a Master, and with fear of his wrath if we do provoke him by abusing his mercies. (29.) For this gracious God, which is our God, will show himself to the provoking Christians, as (or more severely than) he threatened to the Israelites, Deut. iv. 24; an emblem of which we have Exo. xxiv. 17, where the sight of the glory of the Lord, that is, of his presentiating himself, was like devouring fire on the top of the mountain." — *Hammond*. ¶ *For if they escaped not*, &c. See notes on ch. ii. 2, 3. ¶ *Yet once more I shake*, &c. "This shaking, being for the removal of things which were shaken, and they being not the material earth, must signify the things which were then introduced with the shaking of the earth, that is, the covenant made, and the worship and tabernacle, and other materials then appointed to be made with hands for God's service; which, as the apostle throughout this whole epistle contends, were to be abolished, and to continue only till the time of reformation, ch. ix. 10, and then to give place to that new covenant and dispensation which procured for us an eternal redemption, and an entrance, not into the holy place

whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

### CHAPTER XIII.

**L**ET brotherly love continue.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby

made with hands, but into heaven itself." — *Whitby*. "The manner in which the writer understood the figurative expression in question, namely, the shaking of the heavens and the earth, is here plainly declared. It denotes a great change, a removal, or abolition of the things changed, that is, of the Jewish dispensation. The language which had been literally applied to the quaking of Sinai, when the law was given, is now figuratively applied, in the usual scriptural way, in order to denote a great change of a moral nature." — *Stuart*. ¶ *A consuming fire*. "To consume thine enemies, if thou obey him, and to bring them down before thy face, Deut. ix. 3; but to consume thee, if thou forget the covenant thou hast made with him. Deut. iv. 24. This hath relation to the Shechinah, or glorious presence of God, the sight of which was like devouring fire, Exo. xxiv. 17, and from which went out fire to consume Nadab and Abihu, Lev. x. 2, and those two hundred and fifty persons which burned incense, Numb. xvi. 35." — *Whitby*. "Good as he has shown himself to us in sending his Son, and in admitting us into his everlasting kingdom, yet is he severe to those who forsake or violate his laws. Deut. iv. 23, 24; ix. 3." — *Sykes*. The apostle gives this renewed and final warning to his brethren, that God will assuredly punish apostates; they might more safely brave the fury of men than the justice of God. See notes on Matt. xvi. 24, 25. Fire is a common emblem to denote punishment. See note on 2 Thess. i. 8.

some have entertained angels unawares.

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

5 Let your conversation be

### CHAPTER XIII.

1. *Let brotherly love continue*. See note on Rom. xii. 10.

2. *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers*. Be hospitable. See note on Rom. xii. 13. ¶ *For thereby some have entertained angels unawares*. Unexpected blessings may be the fruit of hospitality. The apostle is generally supposed to allude here to what is recorded concerning Abraham and Lot, Gen. xviii. 1-8; xix. 1-3.

3. *Remember them that are in bonds, &c.* All men are brethren, children of one Father. They should truly sympathize with each other, both in joy and in sorrow. See note on Rom. xii. 15.

4. *Marriage is honorable in all, &c.* "Let marriage be honored among all, and the bed undefiled." — The fact that such an exhortation is here addressed to the Hebrews shows, either that some of them were chargeable with a breach of the precept respecting chastity, or that they were in danger of becoming so. Polygamy and concubinage were practised by all around them, and had been for time immemorial. The demands of Christianity, then, in respect to these practices, might seem a grievance to some of the Hebrew Christians, and probably they were tempted not to regard them, and therefore needed caution." — *Stuart*. ¶ *But whoremongers, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. vi. 9.

5. *Let your conversation*. Your conduct. See note on 2 Cor. i. 12. ¶ *Be without covetousness, and be content, &c.* Be not inordinately desirous of earthly goods, but gratefully accept

without covetousness; *and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who

have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with

what God provides. Phil. iv. 11; 1 Tim. vi. 8. ¶ *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* God has promised to protect you, and you may safely trust in him. Deut. xxxi. 6; Josh. i. 5; 1 Chron. xxviii. 20.

6. *So that we may boldly say, &c.* "The quotation is from Ps. cxviii. 6. The meaning of the verse is, under whatever trials and difficulties we may be placed, we need not be filled with terror or painful apprehension, for God will help us."—*Stuart*. This general truth was urged by the apostle, to encourage his brethren to remain faithful in the midst of persecutions, rather than, abandoning confidence in God, to seek safety by apostasy.

7. *Remember them which have the rule over you, &c.* Or, *the guides*, as in the margin. Hold fast the instructions of those "who have spoken to you the word of God;" imitate their steadfastness in the faith, and their fidelity even unto death. "There is allusion, doubtless, to those who had been their religious instructors, and who had died in the faith of the gospel, either by persecution or by an ordinary death; and the apostle points to them as examples of that to which he would exhort those whom he addressed. Of perseverance in the faith until death."—*Barnes*. "It is not improbable that the writer refers here to the triumphant death of Stephen, Acts vii. and of James, Acts xii."—*Stuart*.

8. *Jesus Christ the same, &c.* That is, he is unchangeable. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." John xiii. 1. He so loved mankind, that he "tasted death for every man," and

"gave himself a ransom for all." Ch. ii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 6. It is safe to cleave to him, for he will love all even "unto the end." By this consideration the apostle persuaded his brethren not to renounce their faith. "The connection and meaning of this verse are now very easy. It contains a *reason* why the Hebrews should imitate the faith of their deceased, perhaps martyred, pastors; namely, because the apostle knew that those pastors believed aright concerning Christ; and that there was no change made since in the object of their faith. Jesus is the same to-day as he was yesterday, that is, lately, when those pastors were living and believed in him; wherefore you ought to entertain the same faith concerning him as they did. He was, and is, and forever will be, the same common and all-sufficient mediator between God and men; till at the end of the world there shall be no need for his acting as mediator any longer, when all his enemies shall be subdued, and all his people glorified, when God shall be all in all."—*Hallet*. "That is, Christ is always the same, always ready and willing to aid you in all your trials."—*Stuart*.

9. *Be not carried about, &c.* See note on Eph. iv. 14. "Doctrines *different, diverse* from true Christian doctrine, and *foreign* (strangers) to it. Such were the doctrines of the Judaizing teachers respecting many of their ceremonial observances and traditional rites; and to these the writer here adverts, as appears by the sequel."—*Stuart*. ¶ *For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, &c.* "The right way is to be firmly rooted and established in the gospel of Christ.



grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to his name.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

The gospel is here by way of eminence called *grace*. See John i. 17. And the reason why it is so called is because it proceeded purely and solely from the love and kindness or favor of God, who so loved the world as to send his only begotten Son into the world to save mankind. He by that showed the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us. Eph. ii. 7. To be established, then, in grace is so to be convinced of the truth of the gospel as to persevere steadily in the profession of it. — They who constantly used or observed a distinction of *meats* and *drinks*, and such kind of ordinances, cannot by them make themselves acceptable unto God, so as to obtain what he has promised by Christ." — *Sykes*. If any, therefore, should apostatize from the Christian faith, and go back to the beggarly elements of Judaism, they would lose their confidence in divine grace, and vainly strive for justification by works. Rom. iii. 19–31.

10–16. *We have an altar, &c.* The apostle resumes the sacrificial phraseology, and urges his argument once more against apostasy by declaring that it involves more loss than gain. The general idea is well expressed in the following paraphrase: (10.) "The Jew, indeed, while he continues such, cannot partake of the Christian altar. By his own law, he cannot. (11.) The bodies of those beasts which were sacrificed for the expiation of sin were carried without the camp and

burned, but never eaten. (12.) As Christ fulfilled that type, he was put to death without the city. Of his body, therefore, the Jew, while he continues such, cannot partake. (13.) But let us Christians follow him without the gate, bearing patiently every reproach which the Jew can lay upon us; (14.) Not considering this earthly Jerusalem, but heaven, as our home. (15.) Through Christ, then, let us offer up our praises and thanksgivings to God; (16.) Always remembering that the best sacrifice is a holy life." — *Gilpin*. In regard to partaking or *eating* of the altar, see notes on 1 Cor. ix. 13; x. 18. ¶ *Burned without the camp.* See Exo. xxix. 14; Lev. iv. 11, 12. ¶ *Suffered without the gate.* The precise spot we know not; but it "was nigh to the city," John xix. 20; of course outside of it. ¶ *Bearing his reproach.* Better may we bear the reproaches and even the persecutions of our adversaries, than become involved in their destruction, through apostasy. ¶ *No continuing city.* See note on ch. xi. 10. ¶ *By him therefore, &c.* "The Jews approached God by the blood of the sacrifice, and by the ministry of their high priest. The exhortation of the apostle here is founded on the general course of argument in the epistle. 'In view of all the considerations presented respecting the Christian High Priest, his dignity, purity, and love, his sacrifice and his intercession, let us persevere in offering through him praise to

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech *you* the rather to do this that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through

the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

23 Know ye that *our* brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

24 Salute all them that have

---

God.' That is, let us persevere in adhering to our religion." — *Barnes*. ¶ *To do good and to communicate*. "But of beneficence and liberal distribution be not unmindful." — *Haweis*. "Be not unmindful of benevolence and liberality." — *Conybeare*.

17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, &c.* See note on ver. 7, where the departed or martyred religious teachers are mentioned. Here the reference is to *living* teachers. "Not that any had dominion over their faith; or that any were implicitly to be obeyed or submitted to; but their burden in watching for their good was to be made as light as possible, that those who were set over them might go through their office with comfort and satisfaction." — *Sykes*.

18. *Pray for us*. See note on 2 Cor. i. 11. ¶ *We trust we have a good conscience*. See note on Acts xxiii. 1.

19. *That I may be restored to you the sooner*. "This seems plainly to imply, that the writer was deterred from paying those a visit whom he addressed, by some adverse circumstances, namely, either by imprisonment, sickness, or some like cause. It also implies that he is known to them, and they to him; for it indicates that he had formerly been among them." — *Stuart*.

---

20. *Now the God of peace*. See note on Rom. xv. 33. ¶ *That great Shepherd of the sheep*. See John x. 7-16. ¶ *Everlasting covenant*. See ch. viii. 6-13.

21. *Make you perfect, &c.* "The meaning is, that Paul prayed that God would fully endow them with whatever grace was necessary to do his will and to keep his commandments." — *Barnes*. This is the natural fruit of the "everlasting covenant," and of the grace which it reveals. See notes on Acts iii. 25, 26; Tit. ii. 11-14. ¶ *Working in you that, &c.* See note on Phil. ii. 13. ¶ *To whom be glory*. "To the God of peace be glory ascribed." — *Hallett*.

22. *I have written a letter unto you in few words*. Though this epistle be longer than any other written by Paul, except that to the Romans and the first to the Corinthians, it is "reasonable to suppose that the writer means to say, that he had written *briefly*, considering the importance and difficulty of the subjects of which he had treated." — *Stuart*.

23. *Our brother Timothy is set at liberty*. See note on Rom. xvi. 21. Some translate, "is sent away," that is, by the writer, and expected soon to return.

the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

---

24. *Salute all.* See notes on Rom. xvi. 3, 5. ¶ *That have the rule over you.* See note on ver. 17. ¶ *They of Italy salute you.* This indicates that the epistle was written at Rome.

25

25 Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

---

¶ Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy.

---

25. *Grace be with you all.* See notes on Rom. xvi. 20, 24.

The subscription, like others, is regarded as without authority.

## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

### CHAPTER I.

**J**AMES, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes

### CHAPTER I.

This epistle, and the six which follow, are called *catholic* or *general*. The reason most frequently assigned is, that they are general in their character, and not, like the others, addressed to particular churches or persons; which reason, however, does not apply to the second and third Epistles of John. It has been suggested that the name was given before these two epistles had been received into the Canon of Scripture, and that they were inserted where they stand, because written by the author of that which precedes them. The *name*, however, is found only in the *titles*, which are not of divine authority, and might, without impropriety, be dropped altogether. There were two apostles named James; one, styled James the Greater, son of Zebedee and brother of John, suffered early martyrdom by command of Herod, Acts xii. 2; the other, styled James the Less (Mark xv. 40), son of Alphaeus and a kinsman of our Lord according to the flesh, was for a long time a prominent person of the church in Jerusalem, and seems to have been recognized by the other apostles as their presiding officer when in council. Acts xv. 6-21. He is generally supposed to have been the writer of this epistle. See notes on Matt. x. 2, 3.

1. *James, a servant of God, &c.* For the meaning of *servant*, as here used, see note on Rom. i. 1. ¶ *To the twelve*

which are scattered abroad, greeting.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

*tribes which are scattered abroad.* Or, which are of the dispersion, — especially such of them as were Christians. There were two principal dispersions of the Jews: “the Eastern (beyond the Euphrates) and the Western; which latter had commenced at the time of Alexander the Great, and increased so much, that, in the apostle’s age, all the commercial and manufacturing cities of Syria, Egypt, and other parts of the sea-coasts of Africa, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and Syria, were full of them.” — *Bloomfield*. From what follows, it appears that these, in common with the other early Christians, were tempted to apostasy, or to a relapse into Judaism, as a means to escape persecution by the unbelieving Jews. ¶ *Greeting*. See note on Acts xv. 23, where the same word is used by the writer of this epistle.

2. *Count it all joy when ye fall, &c.* Be not discouraged by persecution or by any other trial of your faith; but rather rejoice, because such discipline is profitable. Ver. 3. See note on Matt. v. 12; Rom. v. 3. ¶ *Divers temptations*. “Temptations, saith Ecumenius, are of two kinds: (1.) such as lead to sin, which the lusts of the flesh and the love of riches produce in us, 1 Tim. vi. 9, against which our Lord instructs us to pray that we enter not into them; and of these the apostle begins to discourse, ver. 13: — or (2.) such as are sent for the trial of our constancy and sincerity in

3 Knowing *this* that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and up-

braideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord,

the faith; and to our patience and perseverance under these is promised a great reward in heaven; and of these the apostle speaketh here, and ver. 12. See Luke xxii. 28; Heb. iv. 15."—*Whitby*.

3. *The trying of your faith worketh patience.* See note on Rom. v. 3. Spiritual improvement is the natural result of the trials which we encounter, if we meet them in a becoming manner.

4. *But let patience have her perfect work.* "Patience under trials is fitted to produce important effects on the soul, and we are not to hinder them in any manner by a perverse spirit, or by opposition to the will of God. Every one who is afflicted should desire that the fair effects of affliction should be produced on his mind, or that there should be produced in his soul precisely the results which his trials are adapted to accomplish."—*Barnes*. ¶ *That ye may be perfect and entire.* Or, *complete*. "This word is applied to such living creatures as have all the members which belong to their kind. See 1 Thess. v. 23. Here it signifies that the virtues proper to the new creature, which the brethren already possessed, were to be complete both in principle and in practice."—*Macknight*. Of course, absolute sinless perfection, or freedom from sinfulness, is not to be expected in the present life; but we should strive to approach it as nearly as possible. See note on Matt. v. 48.

5. *If any of you lack wisdom, &c.* "The best expositors are in general agreed, that by *σοφία* is here meant, not 'spiritual knowledge,' but 'practical wisdom, prudence, and judgment' (as ch. iii. 13, 15, 17; 2 Pet. iii. 15), namely, how to act in any critical con-

juncture. Yet the term may also be meant to denote that 'spiritual wisdom' by which we are enabled to see *whence*, and *why*, afflictions come, and how they are to be improved. See Zwingli and Beza. The words, indeed, seem meant (as Thomas Aquinas, Aretius, and Calvin, suggest) to anticipate a possible objection: 'But we have not the gift so to think or act.' To which it is replied, 'Seek it then of God.'"—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *That giveth to all men liberally.* God is more willing to bestow all needed blessings, whether wisdom or aught else, than men are to ask him. See notes on Matt. vii. 8–11. ¶ *Upbraideth not.* Doth not rebuke or repel those who ask for blessings. ¶ *And it shall be given him.* See note on Matt. vii. 7.

6. *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.* "Doubting or hesitating as to nothing, or in no respect. See Acts x. 20; xi. 12. In regard to the matter under consideration, there is to be no hesitancy, no doubting, no vacillation of the mind. We are to come to God with the utmost confidence and assurance."—*Barnes*. We must believe without doubting that God is both able and willing to bestow everything necessary to our highest good. ¶ *For he that wavereth is like, &c.* This is a very striking figure; a wave of the sea, never quiet, and liable to be "driven with the wind and tossed," is a lively emblem of instability. A like figure occurs Eph. iv. 14.

7. *For let not that man think, &c.* A man who doubts the existence of God, or his willingness and ability to bestow blessings, cannot reasonably "think that he shall receive anything from the Lord;" such a man cannot approach

8 A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted :

10 But the rich, in that he is made low : because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it per-

isheth : so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God : for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man :

the throne of grace in full assurance of faith.

8. *A double-minded man is unstable, &c.* With a qualified trust in God, sadly diminished through fear that He will not be "a very present help in trouble," the "double-minded man" often doubts whether he may more safely rely on God or on himself. Perhaps the apostle had special reference to those who were tempted, in a time of persecution, to secure safety by apostasy rather than by a steadfast adherence to the cause of Christ. "A wavering, inconstant Christian, that together with the faith of Christ applies himself to unlawful courses for his own safeguard, hath the infelicity of never knowing which way to turn himself, being always betwixt two, and disquieted upon all occasions." — *Hammond*.

9-11. *Let the brother of low degree rejoice, &c.* "The apostle now passes from general to particular trials, from those of Christians in general to those of the poor in particular, as contrasted with the rich; admonishing the poor not to be cast down and depressed by their poverty, nor the rich to be puffed up by their riches." — *Bloomfield*. Or thus: "(9.) Moreover, let the Christian, who is low in this life, glory in his great dignity as a son of God and an heir of heaven, equally with the rich. (10.) And let the rich, who suffers for being a Christian, glory in being reduced to poverty for his attachment to so excellent a cause. For as a flower of an herb he must soon

die. (11.) For the sun riseth with a burning heat, and withereth the herb; and the flower thereof falleth down and its beautiful form perisheth; so also the rich man, by the common vicissitudes of life, or by diseases and death seizing him in the midst of his glory, shall wither in his ways; the grandeur of his state shall vanish." — *Macknight*. Earthly goods are not permanent. Sooner or later we must leave them, if they do not leave us. The possession of such goods for a few years, more or less, is of small consequence, compared with the testimony of a good conscience and an unwavering confidence in God. See Matt. vi. 33.

12. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation.* See note on ver. 2. ¶ *He shall receive the crown of life.* See notes on 1 Cor. ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 8.

13-15. *Let no man say when he is tempted, &c.* "Having spoken of the benefit of temptations in the sense of trials, the apostle now touches on temptations in the more usual sense, namely, solicitations to sin (which may be called internal, as those external trials); guarding his readers against the fatal error of ascribing such temptations to God, as if impelling men to sin. Such, he says, proceed not from God, but from the lusts of men, which, if yielded to, will bring death rather than a crown of life; and therefore, though trials may be ascribed to God, yet temptations, in the bad sense, must not." — *Bloomfield*. It should be remembered, however,

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father

of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20 For the wrath of man

that although God neither commits nor incites sin, inasmuch as all his acts and all his designs are good, it is nevertheless true that the actions of men, whether sinful or otherwise, are foreseen and arranged by him, in conformity with the accomplishment of his own purposes. See notes on Acts ii. 23; iii. 18; Rom. ix. 17-22. The sinfulness of men does not take God by surprise. It was foreseen, and a remedy provided for it from the beginning. ¶ *But every man is tempted, &c.* See notes on Rom. vii. 5-10. So true is it, generally speaking, that fleshly lusts and passions furnish temptations to sin, that the apostle declares, "He that is dead is freed from sin." Rom. vi. 7. See notes on Gal. v. 19-21. ¶ *Then when lust hath conceived, &c.* "The allusion here is obvious. The meaning is, when the desire which we have naturally is quickened, or made to act, the result is that sin is produced. In the mere desire of good, of happiness, of food, of raiment, there is no sin; it becomes sin when indulged in an improper manner, and when it leads us to seek that which is forbidden, to invade the rights of others, or in any way to violate the laws of God." — *Barnes*. ¶ *And sin, when it is finished.* When the sinful purpose is fully formed; when the mind yields and becomes captive to the power of temptation. ¶ *Bringeth forth death.* See notes on Rom. v. 21; vi. 23.

16. *Do not err, &c.* Carefully distinguish between the enticements to sin and the source of all good, between

the "works of the flesh" and the "fruits of the Spirit." Gal. v. 19-23.

17. *Every good gift and every perfect gift, &c.* The general idea conveyed in this verse is, that all the blessings which men enjoy, whether physical or spiritual, whether temporal or eternal, are the fruit of divine goodness; and that men may safely trust in God, as a Father whose faithfulness will never fail. God is absolutely unchangeable in his character, and in his affection to his children; he is not subject even to the slight perturbations which affect the most conspicuous source of light and heat in the physical universe, known to us, with which he is here impliedly compared. The variations of day and night, summer and winter, do not affect the influence of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul. God doeth good continually.

18. *Of his own will begat he us.* "The meaning here is, that we owe the beginning of our spiritual life to God." — *Barnes*. ¶ *With the word of truth.* See note on John xvii. 17. ¶ *That we should be a kind of first-fruits.* See notes on Rom. viii. 20-23; xvi. 5.

19. *Let every man be swift to hear, &c.* "Seeing therefore God hath been so gracious to us, let these advantages be used to reform everything that is amiss; let it engage us to those moral duties oft recommended to us, as to be very ready to hear and learn, and yet very deliberate and wary in our words, so to be very hardly brought to anger or impatience, whatever the wickedness of men, whatsoever our provocations be." — *Hammond*. This

worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

exhortation is general in its form, and should be reverently heeded by every Christian disciple; but it was probably designed by the writer for the special benefit of his brethren who were beset by "divers temptations," ver. 2, that they might remain steadfast in the faith.

20. *For the wrath of man worketh not, &c.* Doubtless the wrath and the wickedness of mankind is overruled and made conducive to the accomplishment of the righteous purposes of God. See Gen. xlv. 4-8; 1. 20; Acts ii. 22, 23; iv. 25-28. But men are not thus co-laborers with God, or partners of the divine nature. God designs good, and is righteous; men design evil, and are guilty. This idea is fully illustrated in Isa. x. 5-19.

21. *Wherefore lay apart all, &c.* "Wherefore putting away all the filthiness of fleshly lusts, and the abounding of maliciousness, which leads men to persecute those who differ from them, embrace ye with a teachable disposition the doctrine of the gospel, as now implanted in the world by us apostles; which doctrine is able to save your souls." — *Macknight*. Or, more briefly thus: "Lay aside, therefore, every degree of bitterness. That holy gospel which is to save your souls can be received only in the spirit of meekness." — *Gilpin*. This exhortation, like that in ver. 19, probably had a special application to the persons immediately addressed; but it is general in its character and profitable unto all. ¶ *Filthiness*. The apostle may be understood to mean that all sin is defiling and disgusting, or to refer specially to the viler class of sins.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not

See Rom. i. 24-32. ¶ *Superfluity of naughtiness*. "Literally, 'abounding of evil.' It is rendered by Doddridge, 'overflowing of malignity;' by Tindal, 'superfluity of maliciousness;' by Benson, 'superfluity of malice;' by Bloomfield, 'petulance.'" — *Barnes*. Substantially the exhortation is like that which is written in Heb. xii. 1. Whatever sinful habit interferes with Christian faith and obedience, let it be laid "aside" or "apart." ¶ *The engrafted word*. The gospel; that is, the principles of the gospel superadded or engrafted upon our natural instincts and impulses and sentiments. ¶ *Which is able to save your souls*. See note on ver. 18. In the remainder of this chapter the apostle points out the manner in which the principles of the gospel, embraced by a living faith and reduced to practice, save the soul from the power and dominion of sin.

22-25. *But be ye doers of the word, &c.* The benefit referred to in ver. 21, as flowing from the "engrafted word," may not be reasonably expected by the hearer, who fails to be a doer of his duty. Whoso thinks that a mere knowledge of the truth, without conformity to its requirements, is sufficient, deceives himself. This truth is illustrated by a familiar comparison, ver. 23-25, which has been well paraphrased thus: "For if any one be a hearer of the gospel, and does not practise its precepts, he is like a man who, from custom or by accident, views his natural face in a looking-glass, without any intention to wipe off the spots that may be on it. For he looketh at himself, without taking notice of the spots on his visage, and,



a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

going away, immediately forgets what kind of appearance he had, without removing from his face what is foul. But he who, with an intention to correct his errors, looketh narrowly into the perfect law of liberty, and does not go away as the other doth, but continueth to look into it, that he may know himself, he not becoming a forgetful hearer, but a careful doer of the work which it enjoins, the same shall be blessed of God in his endeavors to become good."—*Macknight*. The "law of liberty" requires love to God and love to man. Matt. xxii. 37–40. If such love be cherished, obedience to God and the performance of all duties toward men will be rendered as a matter of choice, not of compulsion.

26. *If any man among you seem to be religious, &c.* "If any man appear or make show of serving and worshipping God, profess to be religious, and yet gives his tongue the reins to rail riotously on his fellow-Christians, that man deceiveth himself, flattereth himself with vain hopes, if he think that his religion should ever stand him in any stead."—*Hammond*. There was probably some good reason for selecting this particular breach of the law of love. The general idea is, that no man may properly regard himself as a Christian who habitually and intentionally violates that law of liberty, which requires love to God and love to man.

27. *Pure religion, &c.* Having shown what is *not* religion, the apostle

## CHAPTER II.

MY brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of glory*, with respect of persons.

2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man, in vile raiment;

3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou

here describes its true character. He "does not say that this is the *whole* of religion, or that there is nothing else essential to it; but his general design clearly is, to show that religion will lead to a holy life, and he mentions this as a specimen, or an instance of what it will lead us to do. The things which he specifies here are in fact true. (1.) That pure religion will lead to a life of practical benevolence; and (2.) that it will keep us unspotted from the world. If these things are found, they show that there is true piety. If they are not, there is none. If a man is truly benevolent, he bears the image of that God who is the fountain of benevolence; if he is pure and uncontaminated in his walk and deportment, he also resembles his Maker, for he is holy."—*Barnes*. See Matt. v. 43–48; xxii. 37–40; Acts iii. 26; Tit. ii. 11–14.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *My brethren*. Perhaps both as Jews and as Christians. ¶ *Have not the faith of Jesus Christ*. Do not so hold the faith of Jesus Christ as to show partiality among his disciples. ¶ *The Lord of glory*. See note on 1 Cor. ii. 8. ¶ *With respect of persons*. With partiality, — treating one better than another, with insufficient cause.

2–4. *For if there come unto your assembly, &c.* By a familiar example, the apostle defines his meaning in the phrase "respect of persons." We may rightly show higher respect to a sincere

here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which

he hath promised to them that love him?

6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

8 If ye fulfil the royal law

Christian than to one who neither fears God nor regards men; but high and low station in life, riches and poverty, jewelry and rags, are not sufficient to justify us in esteeming one man more highly than another. ¶ *Judges of evil thoughts.* "That is, who pass judgment from your own evil thoughts, as judging the rich worthy of respect in judgment for his gorgeous attire and outward appearance, and the poor fit to be despised for his outward meanness." — *Whitby*. In ver. 6, 7, it is intimated that the rich had even less claim than others to the respect of Christians, on account of their overbearing conduct.

5. *Hath not God chosen the poor, &c.* In the days of our Saviour, "the common people heard him gladly." Mark xii. 37. While the rich stood aloof, fearful of losing popularity, and possibly apprehending the spoiling of their goods, the poor gladly accepted the message of grace, and rejoiced in hope of the promised blessings. The primitive church was principally composed of the poor, not of the rich and powerful. See 1 Cor. i. 26–28. Such persons, though poor in this world's goods, had more enduring riches. Their faith sustained them amidst the trials of life, and in the hour of death enabled them to rejoice in hope of attaining the *kingdom* of which they were *heirs*, instead of regretting, like the rich, to leave behind them the treasures in which they had formerly trusted. ¶ *Heirs of the kingdom.* See note on Rom. viii. 17.

6, 7. *But ye have despised the poor.* "Koppe reads this as an interrogation. 'Do ye despise the poor?' Perhaps it might be understood somewhat ironi-

cally: 'You despise the poor, do you, and are disposed to honor the rich? Look then and see how the rich treat you, and see whether you have so much occasion to regard them with any peculiar respect.' The object of the apostle is to fix the attention on the impropriety of that partiality which many were disposed to show to the rich, by reminding them that the rich had never evinced towards them any such treatment as to lay the foundation of a claim to the honor which they were disposed to render them." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Do not rich men oppress you, &c.* "Are not the rich those who lord it over you? Are not they the persons who haul you into the courts of justice? Are not they the persons who blaspheme, defame, or profane the honored name (of the Redeemer) pronounced over you (at baptism)? namely, by calling him impostor." — *Bloomfield*. Surely, the rich had not entitled themselves to special honor by such conduct.

8. *If ye fulfil the royal law, &c.* See Matt. xxii. 37–39. This law is styled *royal*, because of its excellence and completeness. Whoso loves God with the whole heart will desire and strive to obey him in all things; and whoso loves all his fellow-men as he loves himself will refrain from injuring his brethren, and will strive to advance their highest happiness. ¶ *Ye do well.* This "royal law" is so "exceeding broad," that it embraces substantially every duty which we owe to God and to men. If we yield perfect obedience to this law, we do well, or perform our whole duty. Practically, all men fall short of perfect obedience; but such is the rule.

according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill

thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

14 What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be

---

9. *But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, &c.* The law requires you to love all others as you love yourselves; and that law *convince*s or *convicts* you as *transgressors*, if you make distinction between the rich and poor, in the manner already indicated.

10. *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, &c.* The apostle here "affirms that he who thus offends against the particular law in question will be condemned as a transgressor of the divine law in general, and thereby be obnoxious to the punishment of transgression; for he who keepeth, or endeavors to keep, the whole of the law, except in *one point* (and especially if that be against the scope of the whole), wherein he deliberately, presumptuously, and habitually offends (for the argument itself implies these limitations), he is adjudged to punishment as a transgressor of the law, quite as much as if he had broken all its precepts. Now, it was an acknowledged principle among the Jewish casuists, that the wilful breach of *one law* of a body of laws involves a transgression of the whole; and accordingly the apostle here means to say, that the same is applicable to the laws of the Christian code, and, in the present case, he who offends in one point may especially be pronounced guilty, inasmuch as the one point concerns *Christian charity*, on which 'hang all the law and the prophets.' See Matt. xxii. 40." — *Bloomfield*.

11. *For he that said, &c.* Or, "that

---

law which said," as in the margin. Two of the Ten Commandments are specified as portions of the same law. A violation of either is a transgression of the law, however strictly all its other requirements be obeyed. Ver. 10. It is not surprising, therefore, that no man is free from sin. Rom. iii. 10, 20; 1 John i. 8, 10.

12. *So speak ye, and so do, &c.* Remember that you are amenable to that "law of liberty" which requires supreme love to God and impartial love to men. Beware lest ye become transgressors of the law by undue respect of persons.

13. *For he shall have judgment without mercy.* See notes on Matt. vii. 2; xviii. 32-35. ¶ *Mercy rejoiceth against judgment.* "That is, it enableth the merciful man to rejoice, as being free from the judgment of condemnation from that God who to the merciful will show himself merciful. Ps. xviii. 27." — *Whitby*. See note on Matt. vi. 14, 15.

14. *What doth it profit, &c.* The apostle resumes the subject embraced in ch. i. 22-27, and asserts, under the form of interrogation, that an unfruitful faith is unprofitable and destitute of saving power.

15-17. *If a brother or sister be naked, &c.* "The comparison in these verses is very obvious and striking. The sense is, that faith in itself, without the acts that correspond to it, and to which it would prompt, is as cold, and heartless, and unmeaning, and useless,

naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

---

as it would be to say to one who was destitute of the necessities of life, 'Depart in peace.' In itself considered, it might seem to have something that was good; but it would answer none of the purposes of faith unless it should prompt to action. In the case of one that was hungry or naked, what he wanted was not good wishes or kind words merely, but the *acts* to which good wishes and kind words prompt. And so in religion, what is wanted is not merely the abstract state of mind which would be indicated by faith, but the life of goodness to which it ought to lead."—*Barnes*.

18. *Yea, a man may say, &c.* The meaning of this verse has been paraphrased thus: "Also one may say, Thou affirmest thou hast faith, and I affirm I have good works; show me, if thou canst, thy faith without doing good works; thou canst not do it, since faith can only be known by the good works which it produceth; and I will easily show thee that I have faith, by my good works."—*Macknight*.

19. *The devils also believe, and tremble.* "Here we have an illustration of the position at ver. 17. To show the vanity of such a faith as does not influence the conduct, the apostle adverts to the fundamental article of all true religion, the existence of one God, the only object of worship, as distinguished from the worship paid to idols,—a doctrine held alike by the Jews and the heterodox Christians

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham be-

---

here alluded to. By the *belief* here spoken of, is to be understood a merely speculative and inoperative belief; such an involuntary belief as even the *demons* entertain, who, we know, confessed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God. See Luke iv. 41."—*Bloomfield*. The word here rendered *devils* is *δαίμόνια*, *demons*. For the meaning of this word, see note on Mark v. 1-20.

20. *Faith without works is dead.* A mere speculative belief or assent to the truth, which does not prompt to good works, is utterly useless, and from its inactivity may be styled a dead faith. The same idea is expressed in ver. 17, 26.

21-24. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, &c.* "Was not Abraham our father accounted by God a righteous person for his works, when he had lifted up Isaac his son upon the altar; and God sware that, because he had done it, he would bless him exceedingly, and that in his seed, Christ, 'all the nations of the earth should be blessed'? In this instance thou seest that his faith only co-operated with his works in procuring him the blessing of justification; and that by his works relating to the offering of Isaac, his faith was rendered complete. And so, by the offering of Isaac, that Scripture was showed to be true in both its parts, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; and,

lieved God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also was not

Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

as a person in high favor with God, he was called by God himself, Isa. xli. 8, the friend of God. Wherefore, from Moses ascribing the justification of Abraham to the work of offering up Isaac, ye see that by works proceeding from faith a man is justified, and not by faith without works. In this passage James hath declared that faith and works are inseparably connected as cause and effect; that faith as the cause necessarily produces good works as its effect, and that good works must flow from faith as their principle; that neither of them separately are the means of our justification, but that when joined they become effectual for that end. Wherefore, when in Scripture we are said to be 'justified by faith,' it is a faith accompanied with good works. On the other hand, when we are said to be 'justified by works,' it is works proceeding from faith." — *Macknight*. In regard to the comparative importance of faith and works, some have supposed the Apostles Paul and James to contradict each other, the one affirming "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," Rom. iii. 28, and the other just as distinctly affirming "that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," ver. 24. A common answer is, that, "by the deeds of the law," Paul referred particularly to the Jewish ritual, while James referred to the Christian virtues and good works. But this is not the only method by which the substantial agreement between the two apostles may be exhibited. "As to the general harmony in doctrine, that is peculiarly well proved in the following passage of Bishop Hopkins: 'There is no opposition at all between the two apostles; for St. Paul only excludes

works from being the way and means of our justification, and St. James only excludes that faith which is without works. St. Paul's scope is to show by what we are justified; and that, he tells us, is by faith. St. James' scope is to show *what kind* of faith that is which must justify us; not an empty, vain, fantastical faith, but such as is operative, and productive of good works. His intent is not to exclude faith from our justification, no, nor so much as to join works with it in partnership and commission; for, ver. 23, he tells us the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness;" — the very place St. Paul (Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6) makes use of to prove justification by faith; and therefore when he saith a man is justified by works, he contends for nothing else than a *working faith*. St. Paul and St. James fully accorded about this doctrine of justification by faith. St. Paul affirms that it is faith alone which justifies; St. James denies that a lonely faith can justify; and we assent to both as true; for the faith which alone justifies us is not a lonely or solitary faith, but accompanied and attended by good works." — *Bloomfield*.

25. *Likewise was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, &c.* Another instance is cited to the same purpose, namely, to show that by works, or by obedience to God, the genuineness and activity of faith was exhibited. See the history in Joshua ch. ii.; see also note on Heb. xi. 31.

26. *For as the body without the spirit, &c.* Or, *breath*, as in the margin. The truth asserted in ver. 17, 20, is here illustrated by a striking metaphor, an unfruitful faith being likened to a lifeless corpse.

## CHAPTER III.

**M**Y brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *My brethren, be not many masters.* Or, *teachers*, as the word διδάσκαλοι is often translated. The connection of this chapter with the foregoing is not very obvious, unless it be designed to enforce the admonition in ch. i. 19. It would seem that some of the early Jewish Christians, who had perhaps previously been teachers of the law, aspired to be the spiritual directors of the church. The apostle dissuades them from assuming such an important position in view of its grave responsibility. ¶ *Knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.* "Or, rather, a severer judgment; that is, we shall have a severer trial, and give a stricter account. The word here used, κρίμα, does not necessarily mean condemnation, but judgment, trial, account; and the consideration which the apostle suggests is not that those who were public teachers would be condemned, but that there would be a much more solemn account to be rendered by them than by other men, and that they ought duly to reflect on this in seeking the office of the ministry." — *Barnes.*

2. *For in many things we offend all.* Or, we all sometimes trip, or stumble. "The word πταίωμεν properly signifies *we trip*. The general course of our life, says Dr. Barrow, is called in Scripture *a way*; the particular passages of it, *steps*; a regular course of right acting, *walking uprightly*; and when we act amiss, *we trip*." — *Gilpin.* ¶ *If any man offend not in word.* Or, in the use of the tongue. The im-

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a lit-

proper use of the tongue is exceedingly mischievous. Ver. 5, 6. Public teachers are in special peril, in this regard. ¶ *The same is a perfect man.* "Perfect in the sense in which the apostle immediately explains himself; that he is able to keep every other member of his body in subjection. His object is not to represent the man as absolutely spotless in every sense, and as wholly free from sin, for he had himself just said that 'all offend in many things.'" — *Barnes.* ¶ *And able also to bridle the whole body.* Or, to control all the members of his body, as the horse is controlled by the bit, or the ship by the helm. Ver. 3, 4. The tongue is more unruly than any other member, ver. 8; if a man can control that, and keep its wild spirit under subjection, he may well hope to "bridle the whole body."

3. *Behold we put bits, &c.* As a horse is controlled by the small piece of iron called *the bit*, so the body is controlled by the "little member," the tongue. Ver. 5. The idea is, that whoso can control his speech can control himself, as easily as the horse is controlled by the bit.

4. *Behold also the ships, &c.* The same idea is illustrated by another figure. The ship, large and unwieldy, even when driven by fierce winds, is turned and guided by a comparatively very small helm, at the will of the helmsman.

5. *Even so the tongue is a little member.* Small in proportion to the whole body, like the *helm* to a ship. ¶ *Boasteth great things.* See Ps. xii. 3; lxxiii. 8. 9. "The particular idea here is, that

tle member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

the tongue seems to be conscious of its influence and power, and boasts largely of what it can do. The apostle means doubtless to convey the idea that it boasts not unjustly of its importance. It has all the influence in the world, for good or for evil, which it claims." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Behold, how great a matter*. Or, how much wood. The word ἔλατν denotes a mass of any material, especially of wood. ¶ *A little fire kindleth*. From a spark of fire a conflagration may arise sufficient to lay a whole city in ruins. Equally disastrous to the peace and happiness of the community are the effects resulting from the use of an unbridled tongue, as is indicated in what follows.

6. *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity*. "This is a metaphor of the same kind with a sea of troubles, a deluge of wickedness. This the apostle says the tongue is, because there is no iniquity which an unbridled tongue is not capable of producing; either by itself, when it curses, rails, teaches false doctrine, and speaks evil of God and man; or by means of others, whom it entices, commands, terrifies, and persuades, to commit murders, adulteries, and every evil work." — *Macknight*. ¶ *The course of nature*. Or, *wheel of nature*, as in the margin. This may "be best explained of the inflammation of the evil passions of human nature, which inflame, not to say poison, the course of society." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *And is set on fire of hell*. For the meaning of γέεννα, here rendered *hell*, see note on Matt. v. 22. To the mind of a Jew, no fire was more destructive or more repulsive than that which consumed the offal cast into the valley of Hinnom. To say that the

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and there-

fire of the tongue was kindled at this place was to represent it in the most odious light.

7. *For every kind of beasts, &c.* Or, *nature of beasts*, as in the margin. "It may be affirmed with confidence, that there is no animal which might not, by proper skill and perseverance, be rendered tame, or made obedient to the will of man. It is not necessary, however, to understand the apostle as affirming that literally every animal has been tamed, or ever can be. He evidently speaks in a popular sense of the great power which man undeniably has over all kinds of wild animals, — over the creation beneath him." — *Barnes*.

8. *But the tongue can no man tame, &c.* It is very difficult to obtain full mastery over the tongue. It is more unruly than the wild beasts. ¶ *Full of deadly poison*. See Ps. cxl. 3; Rom. iii. 13, 14. *Words* will sometimes poison or inflame the whole community.

9, 10. *Therewith bless we God, &c.* The great commandments require us to love God and to love all "men; which are made after the similitude of God." See Matt. xxii. 36–40. It is absurd to praise God and to defame his children. It is absurd to bless God and to curse his children. It is contrary to the course of nature, as is illustrated in what follows. It is contrary to the example given us by our heavenly Father, for imitation. See Ps. cxlv. 9; Matt. v. 43–48. Yet, notwithstanding the apostle denounces the utterance of "blessing and cursing" from the "same mouth," as what "ought not so to be," it has been supposed that infinite "blessing and

with curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either

cursing" proceed from the mouth of God, causing the endless happiness of some men and the endless misery of others, though all "are made after the similitude of God." On the question whether God may properly be supposed to do that which he denounces as improper and sinful in men, see note on Matt. v. 48.

11. *Doth a fountain*, &c. That is, sweet water and bitter water do not flow from the same fountain. Nature does not contradict itself.

12. *Can the fig-tree*, &c. Every tree produces fruit after its kind. Gen. i. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 38. It is because every tree produces fruit proper to itself, and not foreign or incongruous, that the good or bad tree may be known by its fruit. Matt. xii. 33. Men ought to be equally true to their own nature.

13. *Who is a wise man*, &c. If there be any among you who is wise. Some suppose this to refer specially to the public teachers. The distinguishing characteristics of true and false wisdom are exhibited in what follows. ¶ *A good conversation*. Upright conduct. See note on 2 Cor. i. 12. ¶ *Meekness of wisdom*. This expression, like "beauty of holiness," Ps. xvi. 9, indicates the excellence of the grace mentioned. True wisdom never manifests itself in pride and haughtiness. Instead of *boasting* and magnifying its acquisitions, it is conscious and frankly confesses that much yet remains to be learned. And so, as seems here specially indicated, true wisdom does not assume superiority over others, and contend for precedency in a spirit of "bitter envying and strife," ver. 14, but rather exhibits its good will to all,

a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

by according to each what is his due. Ver. 17, 18.

14. *But if ye have bitter envying and strife*, &c. "If that is your characteristic. There is reference here to a fierce and unholy zeal against each other; a spirit of ambition and contention."—*Barnes*. The expression is general, and applicable to all men in all ages; but the apostle is supposed to have special reference to a class of men among those whom he was addressing. "The unbelieving Jews are represented still as men of contention, who obeyed not the truth, Rom. ii. 8; men who were filled with bitter zeal against the preachers of the gospel, Acts xiii. 45; xvii. 5; and very mad against them. And some of them who owned the gospel did yet preach Christ out of contention and envy against St. Paul, Phil. i. 15; and the effects of their disputes were, saith the apostle, envy and strife, 1 Tim. vi. 4, contentions, and fightings about the law; and where they were mixed with the converted Gentiles, we find especial cautions against strife and envy, as at Rome, Rom. xiii. 13; against provoking one another and envying one another, Gal. v. 26; against doing things through strife and vain-glory, Phil. ii. 3; or complaints of the abounding of these vices, 1 Cor. i. 11; iii. 3. See especially 2 Cor. xii. 20." — *Whitby*. One of the most extravagant specimens of such "bitter envying" is manifest in the unwillingness of some men that others should be joint-partakers of divine blessings, and in their professed reluctance even to enter heaven, if they must share it with those whom they regard as un-



15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that *is* from above *is* first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and

worthy associates. Such "wisdom" is well described in ver. 15. Its possessors should not *boast*, but rather hide their faces in shame; for any pretence that this is the "meekness of wisdom" is a "lie against the truth."

15. *This wisdom descendeth not from above.* It has not a heavenly origin. ¶ *But is earthly, sensual, devilish.* It "is mere earthly (that is, animal, or carnal, belonging only to the *natural* man) wisdom, nay, demoniacal; meaning, such as we may conceive of demons, whose wisdom is but cunning and deceit, and is subversive of all order, — qualities the very opposite to those by which *true* wisdom (which is then described) displays itself." — *Bloomfield*. For the meaning of *ψυχικῆς*, translated (*sensual*), see note on Matt. xvi. 26; and of *δαμονιώδης*, translated *devilish*, or rather, as it should be, *demoniacal*, see note on Mark v. 1-20.

16. *There is confusion and every evil work.* "Everything is unsettled and agitated. There is no mutual confidence; there is no union of plan and effort; there is no co-operation in promoting a common object; there is no stability in any plan; for a purpose, though for good, formed by one portion, is defeated by another." — *Barnes*. The peace of the family, or church, or neighborhood, or nation, is destroyed, whenever the spirit of envying and strife has sway; and the people devise and execute evil against each other.

17. *But the wisdom which is from above.* Heavenly, godlike, inspired by the divine Spirit, and resembling its source. ¶ *Is first pure, &c.* "First it is *pure*, in respect of its objects, motives, and tendency, 'per-

fecting holiness in the fear of God.' (2.) It is *peaceable* and *peace-making*, disposed to cultivate 'peace with all men,' and to promote it among them. (3.) It is *gentle*, and forbearing, ready to comply in all things not sinful. (4.) It is *easy to be persuaded* to what is reasonable, or to admit any reasonable extenuation of error. (5.) It is *full of mercy and compassion*, abounding in the good fruits springing from thence, beneficence and charity to the poor and afflicted. (6.) It is *impartial*, having no respect for persons or parties; compare 1 Cor. iii. 3, 4. Finally, it is described as *free from hypocrisy*, free from the affectation of superior sanctity, which is commonly found to accompany the spiritual pride alluded to in 2 Cor. xii. 20." — *Bloomfield*. Let it not be forgotten, that we are required to imitate God; and hence, if this be the spirit which we are required to cultivate towards each other, we may well believe that he manifests the same spirit towards his children. See note on Matt. v. 48.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

## CHAPTER IV.

FROM whence come wars and fightings among you?

fecting holiness in the fear of God.' (2.) It is *peaceable* and *peace-making*, disposed to cultivate 'peace with all men,' and to promote it among them. (3.) It is *gentle*, and forbearing, ready to comply in all things not sinful. (4.) It is *easy to be persuaded* to what is reasonable, or to admit any reasonable extenuation of error. (5.) It is *full of mercy and compassion*, abounding in the good fruits springing from thence, beneficence and charity to the poor and afflicted. (6.) It is *impartial*, having no respect for persons or parties; compare 1 Cor. iii. 3, 4. Finally, it is described as *free from hypocrisy*, free from the affectation of superior sanctity, which is commonly found to accompany the spiritual pride alluded to in 2 Cor. xii. 20." — *Bloomfield*. Let it not be forgotten, that we are required to imitate God; and hence, if this be the spirit which we are required to cultivate towards each other, we may well believe that he manifests the same spirit towards his children. See note on Matt. v. 48.

18. *And the fruit of righteousness, &c.* The idea is that those who act in accordance with the teachings of heavenly wisdom promote peace and righteousness among men. While envying produces strife, and contention, and iniquity, purity of intention and kindness of heart tend to peace, and harmony, and righteousness. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. v. 8, 9.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. From whence come wars and fightings among you? "This epistle seems

come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye

may consume it upon your lusts.

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

5 Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit

to have been written about the eighth year of Nero, and the sixty-second of Christ, the year before the death of James; before which time the Jews had great wars and fightings, not only with their neighbors, but even among themselves in every city and family, saith Josephus; not only in Judea, but in Alexandria, Syria, and many other places." — *Whitby*. ¶ *Your lusts*. "The word rendered *lusts* is in the margin rendered *pleasures*. This is the usual meaning of the word ἡδονή; but it is commonly applied to the pleasures of sense, and thence denotes desire, appetite, lust. It may be applied to any desire of sensual gratification, and then to the indulgence of any corrupt propensity of the mind. The lust or desire of rapine, of plunder, of ambition, of fame, of a more extended dominion, would be properly embraced in the meaning of the word." — *Barnes*. ¶ *That war in your members*. The word *members* is here put for the body, or the fleshly nature. For the warfare which exists between the animal passions, or the lusts of the flesh, and the spiritual nature of man, see Rom. vii. 14–25. See also ch. i. 14.

2–4. *Ye lust and have not, &c.* "All your coveting, and envying, and contending, and fighting, brings you in no kind of profit, because praying to God, which is the only means of attaining it, is neglected. And for them that do pray to God, it is yet, among many of you, only or principally for such things as may be instrumental to your lusts, and therefore God, who hath promised to grant all things that we pray for, if it be for our advantage that he should,

doth not grant you such prayers as these. And ye that thus behave yourselves to God, as adulterers or adulteresses to their mates, that receive other loves into competition with him, that think to love God and the world too, must know that this cannot be done; the loving of the world, the pursuing of worldly ends or advantages, is not the loving but the hating of God; whosoever therefore is a lover of the world is by that to be presumed to be a professed enemy of God." — *Hammond*. See notes on Matt. vi. 21–24.

5. *Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, &c.* In this verse "some difficulty is involved, inasmuch as, though the words purport to be a citation from Scripture, they are nowhere to be found there. To avoid this difficulty, some resort to conjecture, while others suppose the words taken from an Apocryphal book, or regard them as an interpolation, — methods alike objectionable. It is best to suppose the expression ἡ γραφή to refer, not to any particular passage of Scripture, but only to the general tenor of Scripture in its declarations on the above subject, of friendship with the world, or worldly-mindedness; on which subject, see John xv. 18–20; Matt. vi. 24; Luke xvi. 13, 15, &c." — *Bloomfield*. As to the rest, some commentators divide the verse into two interrogations, and understand it thus: Do ye think the Scripture speaketh vainly, in condemning such worldliness? No. Do ye think the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is prone to envy? No. Others, with perhaps quite as good reason, interpret thus: Do ye

that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

think the Scripture speaketh falsely, in saying that such envy and worldliness is natural to "the spirit of man which is in him"? 1 Cor. ii. 11.

6. *But he giveth more grace.* Though man is thus prone to evil, God giveth grace to turn him away from his iniquities. See note on Rom. v. 20, 21. This is offered as an encouragement to transgressors to "submit themselves to God," and to "draw near" to him, ver. 7, 8. ¶ *Wherefore he saith, &c.* See Prov. iii. 34: "Surely he scorneth the scorners; but he giveth grace unto the lowly." See also Isa. x. 12-15, and Matt. v. 3, 5. God is sovereign, and will humble all those who exalt themselves against him; He is also the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and will support and comfort all those who meekly confide in him.

7. *Submit yourselves therefore to God.* "The duty here enjoined is that of entire acquiescence in the arrangements of God, whether in his providence or grace. All these are for our good; and submission to them is required by the spirit of true humility." — *Barnes*. We may safely confide in him, for he is more mindful of our welfare than earthly parents are of their children's happiness, Matt. vii. 9-11; Heb. xii. 9-11, whether his dispensations for the present be joyous or grievous. ¶ *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* The word *διάβολος*, *devil*, is defined by Robinson as "a traducer, accuser, slanderer, 1 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 3." For some remarks on the scriptural use of this word, see notes on Matt. xiii. 19; John vi. 70; viii. 44; Eph. iv. 27. As here used, it metaphorically denotes any person,

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double-minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness.

or passion, or thing, which would tempt men to rebel against God instead of *submitting* to his will. Temptation, thus personified, flees from us, or becomes less powerful, after each successful resistance. It is not safe to parley with temptation. Resolute and constant resistance, under the blessing of God, affords the only effectual security. See notes on John xii. 31; xiv. 30.

8. *Draw nigh to God.* See 2 Chron. xv. 2. We cannot literally approach nearer to God, for "in him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28. Yet by prayer and meditation we may draw nearer to him spiritually; or, as Paul expresses it, we may "seek the Lord, — feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." Acts xvii. 27. ¶ *And he will draw nigh to you.* None shall sincerely seek him in vain, but he will grant the influence of his Spirit to every loving heart. See note on John xiv. 23. ¶ *Cleanse your hands, &c.* Abandon all sinful practices. ¶ *Purify your hearts.* Abandon all sinful desires. The gospel strikes at the root of iniquity, by condemning sinful desires, see note on Matt. v. 21, 22; and it proposes an effectual salvation by purifying the heart, the seat of desire. If we earnestly endeavor to obey this command, we may reasonably hope for divine aid. "This we must understand to be not merely by cultivating sincere repentance, but also by seeking the "more grace" ver. 6, from Him who hath promised to give it, the help of the Spirit *enabling* the persons both to will and to do; to be no longer 'double-minded,' but whole-minded, chiefly intent on serving God, no longer

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to de-

stroy: who art thou that judgest another?

13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

---

fluctuating between his friendship and the friendship of the world." — *Bloomfield*.

9, 10. *Be afflicted, &c.* The general doctrine of the gospel is, that sincere repentance and sorrow for sin is followed by forgiveness; that the Lord will *lift up* those who are truly humble. See the case of the publican, Luke xviii. 9-14. But some suppose there is special reference here to a visible distinction soon to be made between the proud and the humble; and the passage has been paraphrased thus: "Your reformation of such sins as these must be joined with great humiliation, and mourning, and lamenting them; and that but reasonably at this time, for there be sad days approaching on this nation, utter excision to the unreformed, to the unbelieving, obdurate Jews, and to all the Gnostic heretics among them. The only way to get into the number of those that then shall be delivered is timely to repent and return to Christ." — *Hammond*. "For now the day of vengeance upon the unbelieving and backsliding Jews approacheth, Luke xxi. 22. Now the coming of the Lord to execute vengeance on them draweth near, ch. v. 8, when wrath shall come upon them to the uttermost. 1 Thess. ii. 16." — *Whitby*.

11. *Speak not evil, &c.* This admonition, though applicable to all men, is supposed to have been addressed to the Judaizing Christians who condemned or spoke evil of the Gentile converts, because they did not conform to the

ritual law. ¶ *Speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law.* The law here referred to is probably the law of Christ, elsewhere styled the "law of liberty," ch. i. 25, which exempted men from bondage to the Mosaic ritual, and authorized them to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. Acts xv. 10; Gal. iv. 21-31. By judging those who used their freedom under this law, they condemned the law itself as of evil tendency.

12. *There is one lawgiver.* God alone has the right to prescribe absolute rules of government; to him all are responsible. ¶ *Who art thou that judgest another?* See Matt. vii. 1, and note on Rom. xiv. 4.

13-17. *Go to now, ye that say, &c.* The evil here denounced is the disposition of men to rely on themselves rather than on God, and to regard themselves rather than him, as the controllers of their own actions and the shapers of their own destiny. The meaning is well expressed in the following paraphrase: "Attend now, ye irreligious men, who, forgetting your dependence on God, say, as if all events were in your hand, To-day or to-morrow we will go to such a city, and will abide there one year, and make merchandise and get gain. In this confident manner ye speak concerning futurity, who do not know what shall happen to-morrow. To-morrow ye may die. For what is your life? A smoke, verily, it is, which appeareth for a little time, and

15 For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

## CHAPTER V.

GO to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

then disappeareth while men are beholding it. Instead of which ye ought to say, If the Lord will, and we shall live, certainly we will do this or that, seeing all future events depend on God alone, and not on your pleasure. But now ye boast of your proud speeches concerning futurity, as if ye were absolutely independent on God. All boasting of this sort is impious, implying great ignorance both of yourselves and of God. Being taught by your own Scriptures, that all things are ordered by God, ye have no excuse for your proud speeches. Wherefore, to him who knoweth to think and speak rightly concerning futurity, and doth it not, to him it is sin." — *Macknight*. Men are responsible according to the light and knowledge which they have attained concerning their duty. See notes on Luke xii. 47, 48; John xv. 22–24.

## CHAPTER V.

1. *Weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.* The apostle is supposed to refer to the period mentioned in ver. 8, 9, when the judgment foretold by the Lord should be executed upon the Jewish nation. "That this prediction was exactly fulfilled by the slaughter and spoiling of the rich Jews throughout Galilee and Judea, Josephus will not suffer us to doubt. For he informs us, that the 'zealots spared none but those

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have

who were poor and low in fortune,' and that they were so insatiably rapacious that they searched all the houses of the rich, killing the men and abusing the women. De Bell. Jud. lib. v. ch. 20, § 34; lib. iv. ch. 19." — *Whitby*. The words also have a general application. Riches inherited or honestly acquired and properly used do not involve crime; but woe to him who obtains riches through fraud and oppression, and who either hoards them or squanders them upon his own sinful lusts and appetites. Ver. 2–6.

2, 3. *Your riches are corrupted, &c.* The three principal kinds of wealth amassed by the ancients are here represented, namely, agricultural productions, costly raiment, and the precious metals. These are all represented as perishing for want of use; the corn moulding and rotting, the garments eaten by moths, and the gold and silver, if not actually eaten by rust, tarnished and dim. "The circumstances of their corn, &c., being putrefied, and of their gold and silver being eaten with rust, are mentioned to show that they have not been properly used, but covetously hoarded. And by a strong poetical figure, the rust of their gold and silver is represented both as a witness against them, and an executioner to destroy them. It will bear witness to their covetousness, and punish them by raising the most acute pain in their conscience." — *Macknight*.

4. *Behold the hire of the laborers, &c.*

reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.

7 Be patient therefore, brethren

The poor, who have toiled and earned their bread in the sweat of their faces, are represented as appealing to Heaven, and not in vain, against those who have oppressed and defrauded them. In his deepest affliction, it was a rich consolation to Job that he had been kind to the poor in his days of prosperity. Job xxix. 11-13. Well may the rich "weep and howl," ver. 1, in prospect of impending retribution, if the cries of the oppressed enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5, 6. *Ye have lived in pleasure, &c.* "The propriety of the transition here will appear from a comparison with the kindred passage of Mal. iii. 5. Here we have described the same luxurious profligacy, leading to the same terrible destruction, on which the last of the prophets expatiated, while describing 'the great and terrible day of the Lord.' Thus then, after severely rebuking their *rapacity*, the apostle proceeds to stigmatize their *sensuality*." — *Bloomfield*.

7-9. *Be patient therefore, brethren.* The apostle now addresses those who had suffered oppression, and exhorts them to wait patiently for deliverance, even as the toiling husbandman "waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth" as a fitting reward of his labor. Meantime, until the hour of their deliverance should arrive, they were not to *grudge* against others, or grumble concerning their present inconveniences or persecutions. ¶ *Unto the coming of the Lord.* By "the coming of the Lord" in ver. 7, 8, and "the judge standeth before the door," ver. 9, the apostle is supposed to refer to that visible display of divine power, in the overthrow of the Jewish state

ren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 Grudge not one against

and polity, which was announced by our Lord in Matt. ch. xxiv. Most commentators concur in this opinion. "Behold, the coming of Christ to the destruction of the Jews and malicious, persecuting Gnostics is now very nigh at hand. See Matt. xxiv." — *Hammond*. "This relates to the impending punishment of the Jewish people." — *Grotius*. "He speaks concerning the war waged by the Romans against the Jews, and the calamitous dispersion of that people, then near at hand." — *Calmet*. "He speaks, saith *Œcumenius*, of the coming of the Romans to captivate the Jews, which he calls 'the coming of our Lord;' as St. John does, ch. xxi. 22. And this exposition is confirmed, (1.) From the constant use of the like phrase, 'the day of the Lord is at hand;' Isa. xiii. 6; Ezek. xxx. 3; Joel i. 15; ii. 1; iii. 14; Obad. ver. 15; Zeph. i. 7, 14. From the evils which he saith are coming on the rich, ver. 1, and which then especially came upon them. (2.) From his saying this 'coming is at hand;' and 'the judge standeth at the door,' ver. 9, or, in St. Peter's phrase, 'the end is at hand,' 1 Pet. iv. 7, which answers exactly to the words of Christ touching the destruction of Jerusalem, 'then shall the end come,' Matt. xxiv. 14; it is near, 'even at the door,' ver. 33; her 'desolation draweth nigh,' Luke xxi. 20." — *Whitby*. "By the 'coming of the Lord,' James meant his coming to destroy the Jewish commonwealth." — *Macknight*. "The most natural interpretation of the passage, and one which will accord well with the time when the epistle was written, is, that the predicted time of the destruction

another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

12 But above all things, my

brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith

of Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv.) was at hand, that there were already indications that that would soon occur; and that there was a prevalent expectation among Christians that that event would be a release from many trials of persecution, and would be followed by the setting up of the Redeemer's kingdom." — *Barnes*. When this destruction of the Jewish state and polity was accomplished, the Christians had comparative rest and quiet. 2 Thess. i. 7. The Jews who escaped destruction were fully employed in caring for themselves. For this deliverance from persecution the apostle exhorted his brethren to wait *patiently*.

10. *Take, my brethren, the prophets, &c.* The prophets of old endured persecution, Matt. v. 12, xxiii. 29-31; and their example of patience while suffering affliction is commended as worthy of imitation.

11. *We count them happy which endure.* See notes on Matt. v. 10-12; Rom. v. 3; Heb. xii. 5-11. ¶ *The patience of Job.* The afflictions of Job, and his patient endurance of them, are recorded in the book bearing his name. It has been suggested that this reference to him was designed to show that the good example of a Gentile worshipper was as worthy of imitation as that of the Jewish prophets. ¶ *The end of the Lord, &c.* Ye have seen the result of Job's afflictions, and the evidence of divine pity and

mercy. "Ye have seen in the history of that good man, what a happy termination the Lord put to his sufferings." — *Macknight*. God doth not afflict his children merely or chiefly for the sake of causing pain, but to promote their highest spiritual good. Heb. xii. 10, 11.

12. *Swear not, &c.* See notes on Matt. v. 33-37. ¶ *Lest ye fall into condemnation.* Namely, for taking the name of the Lord in vain. See Exo. xx. 7.

13. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray, &c.* Whatever the affliction, prayer and supplication to God is the natural language of the soul. To none can we go for consolation with so much confidence as to the Father of our spirits. ¶ *Is any merry, &c.* Rather, happy; let such sing praises.

14, 15. *Is any sick among you?* The healing here mentioned seems to be wrought through the miraculous power granted to the apostles and early saints. It can scarcely be conceived that the writer makes such strong general assertions concerning the efficacy of prayer in all ages and by all grades of Christian *elders*. The following paraphrase seems to express the true meaning of the passage: "Is any one sick among you? let him send for the elders of the church who possess the gift of healing diseases, and let them pray over him, after anointing him with oil by the special direction of Christ, in token that a

shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

miracle is to be performed for his recovery. And the prayer of faith will save the sick person from his disease, and the Lord will raise him up from his sick bed. See Mark i. 31. So that although he hath committed sins, for which that disease was sent on him, they shall be forgiven him by the removal of the disease." — *MacKnight*. "Upon the whole, it involves, I apprehend, the least difficulty to suppose that by the healing in question is meant *preternatural* healing; otherwise the strong expressions, 'the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up,' must be taken with such a limitation as, in the present context, would involve a very great harshness." — *Bloomfield*. As to *disease*, see Matt. ix. 2; 1 Cor. v. 5; xi. 30; and as to the gift of healing, see Mark xvi. 18; Acts iii. 6, 7; v. 16; xiv. 8-10; xix. 12; xxviii. 8, 1 Cor. xii. 9.

16. *Confess your faults one to another*. The Papists have relied on this passage in proof that *auricular confession* should be made to the priest, as a means of procuring absolution from sin. But it should be observed that the apostle says nothing of priests or of absolution. The duty of confession is mutual, "one to another;" the priest to the people, as much as the people to the priest. The confession, moreover, is required, not of those who are in health as conducive to salvation, but of the sick as conducive to recovery from diseases supposed to have been produced by sinfulness. The admonition may be applied however in a general sense, as expressed in the following paraphrase: "When you are conscious of having been really to blame, do not perversely vindicate a

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

conduct which your own hearts condemn, but be frank in acknowledging it. Confess your faults, one to another, for we are all too ready to stumble in the way of our duty." — *Doddridge*. See note on Matt. v. 23, 24. ¶ *That ye may be healed*. See note on ver. 14, 15. ¶ *The effectual fervent prayer*, &c. Rather, *energetic prayer*. Probably the specific reference is to the prayers of those who had the "gift of healing." 1 Cor. xii. 9. As to the general efficacy of prayer, it has been well observed, that, "if there is anything that can prevail with God, it is prayer, humble, fervent, earnest *petitioning*. We have no power to control him; we cannot dictate or prescribe to him; we cannot resist him in the execution of his purposes; but we may *ask* him for what we desire, and he has graciously said that such asking may effect much for our own good and the good of our fellow-men." — *Barnes*. See note on Matt. vi. 8; vii. 7, 8.

17, 18. *Elias*. The Greek form of the Hebrew name Elijah. ¶ *Subject to like passions as we are*. This seems designed as an answer to the possible objection that Elijah was a mighty prophet, and therefore ordinary men might not expect to be equally successful. Hence the apostle declares that, however eminent as a prophet, Elijah was a mere man, subject to the common infirmities and passions of humanity. ¶ *And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain*, &c. See note on Luke iv. 25. It is not alleged that Elijah prevented or caused the rain by prayer. He prayed in accordance with the divine will, and under the influence of the divine Spirit; and the event attested the power of God and



19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he

which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

the loyalty of his servant. He declared the will of God that rain should cease, 1 Kings xvii. 1; and God expressly assured him, "I will send rain upon the earth," before he erected the altar, and put the wood, and the bullock, and the water, in order, and besought God to give a visible demonstration of his power: then "the fire of the Lord fell" upon the altar, and "a great rain fell on the earth." 1 Kings xviii. 1-46.

19, 20. *If any of you do err, &c.* Either in doctrine or practice. ¶ *And one convert him.* Turn him back from his wanderings, into the path of truth. God alone has power to turn the heart, as the rivers of water are turned, Prov. xxi. 1; John vi. 44; yet he employs means, sometimes men, to accomplish the work. ¶ *Shall save a soul from death.* Namely, that death which is "the wages of sin." See note on Rom. vi. 23. The Lord declared by his prophet, that the sinner incurs death as the penalty of

wickedness; but that "when he turneth away from his wickedness" he shall pass from death unto life. Ezek. xviii. 19-28. See note on John v. 24. ¶ *Shall hide a multitude of sins.* The reference is probably to the sins of him who is converted from the error of his ways. It may mean, that he will refrain from exhibiting the sinfulness which he has previously cherished in his heart, so that it will forever remain hidden from human view; but more probably it indicates the forgiveness of sins, which is frequently styled covering them or blotting them out, equivalent to hiding them. Of course, sin is not concealed from the eye of God; but he will treat the converted sinner as though he had not sinned. "All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live." Ezek. xviii. 22. See notes on Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15.

# THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

## CHAPTER I.

**P**ETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

## CHAPTER I.

1. *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.* See note on Matt. x. 2; xvi. 18. This epistle has in every age of the church been acknowledged as a general address to his brethren by Simon Peter, one of the earliest disciples of our Lord, and one of the most resolute and successful of the primitive preachers of the gospel. It seems to have been written at a place called Babylon, see note on ch. v. 13, and its date is generally supposed to be not far from A. D. 60. Lightfoot assigns A. D. 65 as the date, saying, "Although we cannot positively assert the very time of writing the First Epistle of Peter, yet, observing the chronical hint of some passages in it, this year may as fairly lay claim thereto as any other year that can be asserted. For, to omit that clause, ch. iv. 7, 'the end of all things is at hand,' referring to the desolating of the Jewish commonwealth and nation, the mention of 'fiery trial,' and 'the time now come when judgment must begin at the house of God,' ch. iv. 12, 17, is but as a comment and accomplishment of that prediction before alleged, 'Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted,' &c. Matt. xxiv. 9." ¶ *To the strangers scattered, &c.* Or, "To the sojourners, dispersed." — *Haweis.* "To the sojourners of the dispersion. — *Macknight.* Some com-

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

mentators suppose the persons addressed were Jewish converts to Christianity; others that Gentile converts are addressed. The better opinion, in my judgment, is, that both classes are included. Scarcely a Christian church is known to have existed at that early period, at any place out of Judea, which did not embrace both Jews and Gentiles; and different portions of the epistle seem specially adapted to the condition of each class. ¶ *Pontus, Galatia, &c.* All these provinces were situated in Asia Minor. See notes on Acts ii. 9; xvi. 6, 7.

2. *Elect.* Chosen. See note on Rom. viii. 33. ¶ *According to the foreknowledge of God.* Nothing is more plainly taught in the Scriptures than that God sees the end from the beginning, and that all events occur "according to his foreknowledge." See notes on Acts ii. 23; xv. 18; Rom. viii. 29. ¶ *Through sanctification of the Spirit.* "The word rendered *sanctification*, ἁγιασμός, is not used here in its usual and technical sense, to denote the progressive holiness of believers, but in its more primitive and usual sense of holiness. It means here *the being made holy*; and the idea is, that we become in fact the chosen or elect of God by a work of the Spirit on our hearts making us holy, that is, renewing us in the divine image." — *Barnes.* See notes on John xvii. 17; 1 Cor. i. 30. ¶ *Sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* See note on

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto sal-

vation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Heb. ix. 14. "As the Israelites, after having declared their consent to the Sinaitic covenant, Exo. xxiv. 7, were formerly initiated into that covenant by being sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifices whereby it was ratified, so all who receive the gospel, being emblematically sprinkled with the blood of Jesus in the Lord's Supper, are initiated into the gospel covenant, which was ratified by the shedding of the blood of Jesus as a sacrifice. Hence apostates themselves are said to have been 'sanctified by the blood of the covenant,' Heb. x. 29. Hence also it is said of the Messiah, Isa. lii. 15, 'He shall sprinkle many nations;' he shall initiate many nations into the gospel covenant; in allusion to the sprinkling of the Israelites at Sinai."—*Macknight*. ¶ *Grace unto you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

3. *Blessed be the God and Father, &c.* See note on 2 Cor. i. 3. ¶ *Hath begotten us.* See notes on John iii. 3, 5. ¶ *Unto a lively hope.* "To the hope of a new life after death."—*Macknight*. Or, "living, in contradistinction from that which is dead. The hope, which they had, had living power. It was not cold, inoperative, dead."—*Barnes*. ¶ *By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* The mission of Christ, as the Son of God and the authoritative teacher and master of men, was demonstrated by his resurrection from the dead. Acts ii. 32-36; v. 30, 31; Rom. i. 4. The resurrection of Christ is the basis of our hope of a future

life. 1 Cor. xv. 12-22; 1 Thess. iv. 14.

4. *To an inheritance.* Namely, a state of holiness and happiness in the future life, to which the subsequent clause limits the meaning, which might otherwise include the joys of the kingdom on earth. See note on Rom. viii. 17. ¶ *Incorruptible.* The word ἀφθαρτον is defined, "*incorruptible, undecaying, enduring,*" when applied to things, and "of God, *immortal.*"—*Robinson*. It here indicates the enduring nature of the inheritance reserved in heaven for us, in contradistinction to the fleeting joys of earth. ¶ *Undefiled.* The word ἀμικτων, which does not elsewhere occur in the Bible, here represents the *inheritance* "as uncontaminated by those vices which so grievously disturb all human happiness, and untainted with that evil which, in this world, ever intermixes itself with what is good."—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *Fadeth not away.* Its brightness never becomes dim or obscure. ¶ *Reserved in heaven for you.* Or, for us, as in the margin. "The idea is, that it is an inheritance appointed for us, and kept by one who can make it sure to us, and who will certainly bestow it upon us."—*Barnes*.

5-7. *Who are kept, &c.* In this passage and what follows, the apostle assures his brethren not only that their final inheritance is safely "reserved in heaven," but that they should be protected "by the power of God" against the evil designs of their

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

persecutors who now caused them to endure "heaviness through many trials," and that their salvation from the calamities which should soon overwhelm the unbelieving and ungodly was even now "ready to be revealed in the last time," otherwise denominated "the appearing of Jesus Christ." The idea is expressed with sufficient distinctness in the following paraphrase: "Who in the mean time are and shall be preserved from present dangers by the power of Christ, which he hath promised to show forth in defending of believers, that we may be partakers of that famous deliverance so often spoken of in the gospel, which is now within a few years ready to appear. Ver. 7. And this is fit matter of rejoicing to you in the midst of your present afflictions, or though for the present ye are permitted by his divine wisdom to be exercised and saddened with variety of afflictions. That this trial of your faith by sufferings, being a thing that tends much more to your advantage than the trial of gold doth to the advantage of gold (because gold is apt to be worn out and perish, see ver. 18, even after it is tried in the fire and found to be good; whereas your faith, approving itself to God, shall not perish, and so hath the advantage), may prove successful to the obtaining for you approbation, and honor, and glory, at the final day of doom, and the like here at this other day of Christ's coming to destroy your persecutors, and to give you an honorable, discernible deliverance, ver. 5; see ver. 13, and ch. iv. 13, and 2 Thess. i. 7." — *Hammond*.

8. *Whom having not seen, ye love.* This epistle was addressed to the

10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did

"strangers scattered" abroad, most of whom, and perhaps all, had never seen the Lord Jesus; yet they loved him in consideration of his love for them and his labors on their behalf. See 1 John iv. 19. ¶ *Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable.* "A very strong expression, and yet verified in thousands of cases among young converts, and among those in the maturer days of piety. There are thousands who can say that their happiness, when they first had evidence that their sins were forgiven, that the burden of guilt was rolled away, and that they were the children of God, was unspeakable. Why should not one be filled with constant joy who has the hope of dwelling in a world of glory forever? Compare John xiv. 27; xvi. 22." — *Barnes*. ¶ *And full of glory.* Either a joyful hope of future glory, or a glorious joy in hope of that which is "reserved in heaven."

9. *The salvation of your souls.* A firm trust in God, and in his Son, affords a present salvation. See note on 1 Tim. iv. 10. This may be regarded as a foretaste of that more perfect salvation which awaits us when we shall have been "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 21. There is perhaps also a reference here to the remarkable preservation of Christians from the destruction which befell the Jewish nation, as in ver. 5. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 13; 2 Thess. i. 6-10.

10, 11. *The prophets have inquired, &c.* "From this it appears, that in many instances the prophets did not understand the meaning of their own prophecies, but studied them, as others did, with great care, in order

signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

13 Wherefore gird up the

to find out. See Dan. vii. 28; xii. 8." — *Macknight*. ¶ *And the glory that should follow*. "That is, they saw that there *would be* glory which would be the result of his sufferings, but they did not clearly see what it would be. They had some knowledge that he would be raised from the dead, Ps. xvi. 8-11; comp. Acts ii. 25-28; they knew that he would 'see of the travail of his soul, and would be satisfied,' Isa. liii. 11; they had some large views of the effects of the gospel on the nations of the earth, Isa. xi.; xxv. 7, 8; lx.; lxvi. But there were many things respecting his glorification which it cannot be supposed they clearly understood; and it is reasonable to presume that they made the comparatively few and obscure intimations in their own writings in relation to this, the subject of profound and prayerful inquiry." — *Barnes*. It is no disparagement to the prophets, to suppose that they did not comprehend the full import of their prophecies. A greater than any of the prophets did not claim to be omniscient. See note on Mark xiii. 32.

12. *Unto whom it was revealed*, &c. They were made to understand that many of their predictions concerned not themselves, but later generations, who should witness "the sufferings of Christ," and be partakers of "the glory that should follow." Ver. 11. Compare Acts ii. 25-36. ¶ *By them that have preached the gospel unto you*. Namely, the apostles. ¶ *With the*

loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

*Holy Ghost*. Their preaching was authenticated by the miraculous power imparted to them by the Spirit, from the time when Peter addressed the Jews on the day of Pentecost to the time when Paul taught all comers "in his own hired house" at Rome. ¶ *Which things the angels desire to look into*. "Literally, *to stoop*. But stooping being the action of one who desires to look narrowly into a thing, it is properly translated *look attentively*. The apostle's meaning is, if our salvation and the means by which it is accomplished are of such importance as to merit the attention of angels, how much more do they merit our attention, who are so much interested in them." — *Macknight*. It is supposed that Peter here alludes to the cherubims, looking down upon the mercy-seat which covered the ark of the testimony, in the most holy place of the temple. Exo. xxv. 20, 21.

13-16. *Wherefore gird up the loins*, &c. See note on Matt. v. 40. ¶ *Be sober and hope to the end*, &c. See notes on Matt. x. 22; Luke xxi. 28, 34, 35. ¶ *Grace*. Favor, whether temporal or spiritual. Whether preservation of life or salvation of the soul be intended, this word χάρις will equally well express the idea. ¶ *At the revelation of Jesus Christ*. This phrase indicates that the apostle refers here not so much to final salvation, as to the remarkable preservation of the disciples of Christ when the condign judgment predicted in Matt. ch. xxiv. befell the Jewish na-

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and

gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreor-

tion. See note on ver. 5-7. Here, as often elsewhere, the saving of life, when in mortal peril, is recognized as one of the fruits of discipleship, notwithstanding the crowning grace of the gospel is spiritual deliverance from sin and its unhappy consequences. The passage has been paraphrased thus: (13.) "Wherefore as servants waiting for your Lord, continue vigilant, and hope steadfastly and perseveringly, without any doubting or anxiety, for the deliverance and mercy which is or shall be wrought for you, by this coming of Christ in so discernible a manner. (14.) As new reformed persons, not relapsing into the sins of your former unregenerate life. (15.) But after the example of the divine purity of God, who hath thus favored you as to acknowledge you his children, do ye live like such; (16.) According to Lev. xi. 44, and xix. 2, which requires all those who are called by the name of God, that receive or hope for mercies from him, to imitate his holiness, to live pure and pious lives."—*Hammond*.

17. *And if ye call on the Father.* If ye believe and trust in him. If ye are Christians. See note on Rom. x. 13. ¶ *Who without respect of persons judgeth, &c.* See notes on Rom. ii. 6; x. 12. ¶ *Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* While you live, cherish a reverent regard for God and his law. See note on 2 Cor. vii. 1.

18. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, &c.* See note on Rom. vi. 20. ¶ *From your vain conversation.* Conversation often denotes conduct; but it seems here rather to denote opinion or doctrine, inasmuch as it was "received by tradition from your fathers." The idea is, that they had

been converted to Christianity, and might hope for all blessings promised to Christians.

19. *But with the precious blood, &c.* Our Lord sacrificed his life in executing the ministry assigned to him, and sealed with his blood the truth of the covenant of which he was the mediator. See note on Acts xx. 28. ¶ *As of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* See Exo. xii. 5; Lev. xxii. 20-24, and note on 1 Cor. v. 7.

20. *Who verily was foreordained, &c.* The necessity, the accomplishment, and the entire and absolute efficacy, of the Son's mission was known and ordained by the Father from the beginning. The word προηνώσκω, here rendered *foreordained* is translated *foreknow*, Rom. viii. 29; xi. 2; and *know before*, 2 Pet. iii. 17. There is doubtless a difference between *foreknowledge* and *foreordination*; but the former certainly implies the latter; for nothing can be foreknown unless it be absolutely certain of accomplishment, and nothing but the will or determination of God can establish such certainty. The apostle mentions a "decree *foreknown*"; but it is well rendered *foreordained*, for this knowing is decreeing, and there is little either solid truth or profit in the distinguishing them. We say, usually, that where there is little wisdom there is much chance, and comparatively amongst men, some are far more foresighted, and of further reach, than others; yet the wisest and most provident men, both wanting skill to design all things aright, and power to act as they contrive, meet with many unexpected casualties and frequent disappointments in their undertakings. But with God, where both wisdom and power are infinite, there can be neither

dained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

any chance, nor resistance from without, nor any imperfection at all in the contrivance of things within himself, that can give cause to add or abate, or alter anything in the frame of his purposes. The model of the whole world and of all the course of time was with him, one and the same, from all eternity, and whatsoever is brought to pass is exactly answerable to that pattern, for with him there is no change nor shadow of turning. James i. 17." — *Abp. Leighton*. ¶ *But was manifest in these last times for you.* In the last or closing period of the Jewish state. See note on ver. 5-7.

21. *That raised him up from the dead.* See notes on Acts ii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 12-20. ¶ *And gave him glory.* Demonstrating his Sonship, Rom. i. 4, and exalting him to a seat at his own right hand. Eph. i. 20, 21. ¶ *That your faith and hope might be in God.* "That is, by raising up the Lord Jesus, and exalting him to heaven, he has laid the foundation of confidence in his promises, and of the hope of eternal life." — *Barnes*.

22. *Seeing ye have purified your souls, &c.* No man can purify himself without the aid of the Spirit, which is here represented as the medium of purification. The idea both of the necessity and the efficacy of human effort, and the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, is more definitely expressed in Phil. ii. 12, 13. ¶ *With a pure heart fervently.* "Peter's description of Christian love is excellent. It springs up in a heart

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

purified by truth, through the assistance of the Spirit; it is sincere in its operation, it is unmixed with carnal passions, and it is permanent." — *Macknight*.

23. *Being born again, &c.* Equivalent to "purified your souls in obeying the truth," ver. 22, and very similar to James i. 18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." See notes on John iii. 3; xvii. 17. ¶ *Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, &c.* "Not laying the stress of your confidence on your pedigree from Abraham, if you had the honor to descend from that illustrious patriarch; for that descent could not entitle you to the important blessings of the gospel." — *Doddridge*. See notes on ver. 24, 25, and on Matt. iii. 9.

24, 25. *For all flesh is grass, &c.* "The word *χόρτος* denotes not only grass, but all kinds of herbs; and among the rest, those which have stalks and flowers. Nay, it seems to be used for shrubs, Matt. vi. 30. This is a quotation from Isa. xl. 6-8, where the preaching of the gospel is foretold and recommended, from the consideration that everything which is merely human, and among the rest the noblest races of mankind, with all their glory and grandeur, their honor, riches, beauty, strength, and eloquence, as also the arts which men have invented, and the works they have executed, all decay as the flowers of the field. But the incorruptible seed, the gospel, called by the prophet 'the word of the Lord,'

## CHAPTER II.

**W**HEREFORE, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2 As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

shall be preached while the world standeth; and the divine nature, which it is the instrument of conveying to believers, will remain in them to all eternity." — *Macknight*. See James i. 11.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *Laying aside*. Abandoning, dismissing from our minds. The same word is rendered "cast off," Rom. xiii. 12. ¶ *Malice*. A wicked desire to injure others. The word κακίαν, however, indicates badness or wickedness of whatever kind; and it is so translated Acts viii. 22. ¶ *Guile*. Subtilty, craft, deceit, as the same word is translated Matt. xxvi. 4; Mark xiv. 1; Rom i. 29. ¶ *Hypocrisies*. Dissimulation. See note on Matt. xxiii. 28. ¶ *Envies*. See notes on Matt. xxvii. 18; Rom. i. 29. ¶ *And all evil speakings*. Speaking injuriously concerning others. The same word is translated backbitings, 2 Cor. xii. 20.

2. *As new-born babes*. Christians are often compared with little children. See note on Matt. xviii. 3. ¶ *Desire the sincere milk of the word*, &c. The pure milk; the unadulterated gospel. ¶ *That ye may grow thereby*. "In the former chapter the apostle told the Christians of Pontus that they were born again of the incorruptible seed of the word. Here he told them that the word is also the milk by which the new-born grow to maturity.

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe *he is precious*: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders dis-

The word, therefore, is both the principle by which the divine life is produced and the food by which it is nourished." — *Macknight*.

3. *If so be ye have tasted*, &c. Rather, since ye have tasted, or because ye have tasted. The apostle does not express a doubt whether his Christian brethren had become conscious of divine grace. See note on Heb. vi. 4.

4. *A living stone, disallowed*, &c. That is, to Jesus Christ, rejected indeed by men, but beloved of God. See note on Matt. xxi. 42.

5. *Lively stones*. Rather, *living stones*, as in ver. 4, where the same word occurs. ¶ *Built up a spiritual house*. The church is compared with a temple, or edifice, constructed of "living stones," resting on a living or sure foundation, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," Eph. ii. 20. See notes on 1 Cor. iii. 9, 16, 17. ¶ *A holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices*. The Jewish priests offered at Jerusalem the sacrifices of the flocks and of the harvests prescribed by the Mosaic law. But all the disciples of Christ are constituted priests so far as to be authorized and required "to offer up spiritual sacrifices," or, in other words, to "worship God in spirit and in truth." John iv. 24.

6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture*. See note on Rom. ix. 33.

7. *He is precious*. Highly esteemed;



allowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

10 Which in time past *were*

regarded as worthy of all honor, and confidence, and affection. ¶ *The stone which the builders disallowed*, &c. See note on Matt. xxi. 42.

8. *And a stone of stumbling*, &c. The preaching of "Christ crucified" was "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness," 1 Cor. i. 23; but far otherwise to believers, ver. 9, and 1 Cor. i. 24. See note on Matt. xxi. 44. ¶ *Whereunto also they were appointed*. Not by accident, but by the divine purpose. They rejected this corner-stone, and crucified the Lord Jesus "by wicked hands;" yet what they did was in accordance with the divine plan, "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," so that the Gentiles might become believers, and all Israel in due time be saved. This subject is fully discussed by the great apostle to the Gentiles in Rom. ch. ix. See also note on Rom. ix. 11.

9. *But ye are a chosen generation*. Or, an elect people. See note on Rom. viii. 33. ¶ *A royal priesthood*. See note on ver. 5. ¶ *A holy nation*. "Taken from Exo. xix. 6. The Hebrews were regarded as a nation consecrated to God, and now that they were cast off or rejected for their disobedience, the same language was properly applied to the people whom God had chosen in their place, the Christian church." — *Barnes*. ¶ *A peculiar people*. The Lord promised the

not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Submit yourselves to

Jews, by Moses, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." Exo. xix. 5. The same descriptive epithet is here applied to those who had "purified their souls in obeying the truth," ch. i. 22. See Tit. ii. 14. ¶ *To show forth the praises*, &c. Let your conduct be such as to induce others to praise and glorify God. See note on Matt. v. 16. ¶ *Who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*. From the darkness of ignorance and sin into the glorious light of the gospel. See Acts xxvi. 18.

10. *Which in time past were not a people*, &c. See note on Rom. ix. 25.

11. *I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims*. See note on ch. i. 1. Dwellers among the Gentiles. Ver. 12. ¶ *Abstain from fleshly lusts*. See note on Rom. viii. 12, 13. ¶ *Which war against the soul*. See notes on Rom. vii. 22, 23.

12. *Having your conversation*. Or, your conduct. "The truth taught here is, that our conduct as Christians should be such as to bear the strictest scrutiny; such that the closest examination will lead our enemies to the conviction that we are upright and honest." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Glorify God*. See note on Matt. v. 16. ¶ *In the day of visitation*. Many and widely different interpretations have been given of

every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17 Honour all *men*. Love

these words. The following seems to be as reasonable as any other:—"That is, in the time of persecution. For a time of great affliction and suffering is called 'a day of visitation,' Isa. x. 3; and when God afflicts, he is said to visit. Jer. vi. 15. It is well known, that the patience, fortitude, and meekness, with which the first Christians bore persecution for their religion, and the forgiving disposition which they expressed towards their persecutors, made such an impression on the heathens who were witnesses to their sufferings, that many of them glorified God by embracing the gospel."—*Macknight*. The word *ἐπισκοπή* occurs in a similar sense, Jer. x. 15; Wisd. iii. 7; Ecclus. xviii. 20.

13-17. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance, &c.* See notes on Rom. xiii. 1-7. ¶ *As free, and not using your liberty, &c.* Because the apostles taught the exemption of Christians from bondage to the ritual law, some of their enemies alleged that they claimed to be absolved from obedience to all law whatever; hence they were represented as insubordinate to civil authority. Peter exhorts his brethren to "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," ver. 15, by a cheerful submission to all legal requirements. ¶ *Cloak of maliciousness.* Rather, of *wickedness*, for *κακία* denotes not only malice, but all kinds of wicked-

the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

18 Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

19 For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

ness indiscriminately. If any particular wickedness be here specified, it would seem to be *disobedience*, rather than *maliciousness*. The general doctrine taught in these verses is, that Christians should honor God and exhibit the purifying influence of the gospel, by obedience to his law, and submission to duly constituted rulers.

18. *Servants, be subject, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. vii. 21. ¶ *But also to the froward.* The servant should do right, even though the master do wrong. Their common Lord will reward them appropriately.

19-20. *For this is thankworthy, &c.* "And this will be accepted graciously and rewarded by God, if upon sight of our duty to God we bear with all patience those pressures which most unjustly light upon us. For what great matter is it, worth considering or rewarding, what heroical action is it, to which honor is thought to be due, if men endure submissively those punishments which fall justly on them for their demerits? But, on the other side, if when ye have done no ill, and are then by your superiors abused and used contumeliously, if this be borne patiently and humbly by you, and do not provoke you to any resistance or return of violence, this is that Christian virtue of meekness, which God will certainly reward in you."—*Hammond*.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins should live unto righteous-

ness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

## CHAPTER III.

**L**IKEWISE, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they behold your

21. *For even thereunto were ye called.* That is, to the patient endurance of persecution. ¶ *Because Christ also suffered for us.* See notes on John xv. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9. ¶ *Follow his steps.* Imitate him.

22. *Who did no sin, &c.* Though "in all points tempted like as we are," our Lord was "without sin." Heb. iv. 15. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Heb. vii. 26. We may not expect, while we dwell in the flesh, to become as sinless and holy as the blessed Son of God; but we may approximate his perfection, and we are bound as Christians to do so.

23. *Who, when he was reviled, &c.* "And when he was reviled by them, Matt. xxvi. 67, he was far from reviling them again; when he was crucified, he gave them not so much as an ill word, but prayed his Father to forgive them, as many as had any excuse of ignorance to plead for them, and for all others he remitted them, and all the injuries done him by them, to God's tribunal." — *Hammond.* "He did not use harsh and opprobrious words in return for those which he received. When he suffered injustice from others, in his trial and in his death, he did not threaten punishment. He did not call down the wrath of Heaven. He did not even predict that they would be punished; he expressed no wish that they should be." — *Barnes.* He

did predict the punishment of the unbelieving Jews for their manifold iniquities, Matt. xvi. 27, 28; xxiii. xxiv., and often elsewhere; but so far as their evil deeds were personal to himself, or so far as he was personally concerned, "when he suffered, he threatened not."

24. *Bare our sins in his own body, &c.* See notes on Matt. viii. 17; Heb. ix. 28. ¶ *Dead to sins.* See note on Rom. vi. 2. ¶ *By whose stripes ye were healed.* Our Lord suffered much, in the gracious work of turning men from darkness to light, from sinfulness to holiness. He suffered that we might be healed, in the same sense that he became poor that we might be rich. See note on 2 Cor. viii. 9.

25. *Ye were as sheep, &c.* Our Lord often compared himself to a shepherd, and mankind to sheep. Matt. xv. 24; John x. 2-5. He avowed his readiness to "give his life for the sheep," and his intention to gather them all together, so that "there shall be one fold and one shepherd." John x. 11-16. Well then might the apostle represent him as "the shepherd and bishop of souls," to whom men return from their wanderings.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. xi. 3-9. ¶ *Be won by the conversation of the*

chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.

3 Whose adorning, let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the

*wives.* See notes on 1 Cor. vii. 12-16.

2. *While they behold your chaste conversation.* Your pure conduct. Purity of life commends the Christian, and also the gospel which promotes such purity, to the respect and confidence of mankind. See note on Matt. v. 16. ¶ *Coupled with fear.* "Either a reverent respect to their husbands, or the fear of God; whence flows best both that and all other observance, whether of conjugal or any other Christian duties. Be not presumptuous (as some), because you are chaste, but temper your conversation that way with a religious fear of God, that you dare not take liberty to offend him in any other thing; and according to his institution, let it be joined with a reverent fear of your husbands, shunning to offend them. But possibly this fear doth particularly relate to this other duty with which it is joined, *chaste conversation with fear*; fearing the least stain of chastity, or the very least appearance of anything not suiting with it. It is a delicate, timorous grace, afraid of the least air or shadow of anything that hath but a resemblance of wronging it, in carriage, or speech, or apparel, as follows in the third and fourth verses." — *Abp. Leighton.*

3. *Whose adorning,* &c. See note on 1 Tim. ii. 9.

4. *But let it be the hidden man,* &c. Let the ornaments consist of spiritual graces. See note on Rom. vii. 22.

old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs to-

¶ *In that which is not corruptible.* Outward apparel is perishable; but a "meek and quiet spirit" is a perpetual ornament.

5. *For after this manner.* That is, with meekness and quietness, rather than with plaited hair, and with gold and costly apparel. ¶ *In the old times.* In the time of the patriarchs. Ver. 6. ¶ *Being in subjection to their own husbands.* See ver. 1.

6. *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham,* &c. Among the wives of the patriarchs, Sarah was one of the most eminent. She was distinguished more by a reverent regard for her husband, and a careful attention to his household affairs, than by a passion for gold and fine apparel. ¶ *Whose daughters ye are,* &c. That is, if your characters resemble hers, you are worthy to be called her daughters, whether you are actually her posterity or not, even as "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Gal. iii. 7. ¶ *Are not afraid with any amazement.* "Of these words the true sense appears to be that assigned to them by Estius, Erasmus, Carpovius, and Calvin; 'not being deterred from persevering in their duty, or in their Christian profession, by the timidity natural to their sex.'" — *Bloomfield.* In that day, the disciples had need of strong faith and implicit confidence in God, to keep them from falling.

7. *Likewise, ye husbands,* &c. See notes on Eph. v. 25-27. ¶ *Giving*

gether of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

8 Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous:

9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

*honor unto the wife.* Treating her with respectful attention, and paying a suitable regard to her reasonable desires. Although Christianity recognizes the fact that "the head of the woman is the man," yet it assigns her a much higher position than she occupied among the Gentiles or Jews. See note on 1 Cor. xi. 3. ¶ *As unto the weaker vessel.* "By this it is not necessarily meant that she is of feebler capacity, or inferior mental endowments, but that she is more tender and delicate, more subject to infirmities and weaknesses, less capable of enduring fatigue and toil, less adapted to the rough and stormy scenes of life. As such she should be regarded and treated with special kindness and attention." — *Barnes*. As to the word *σκεύει*, here translated *vessel*, "as it literally signifies, *anything made*, so it may here very well have the sense *creature*, in reference to God the creator." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *And as being heirs together of the grace of life.* The grace of God, in the bestowment of salvation, makes no distinction between male and female, but they "are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 28. ¶ *That your prayers be not hindered.* Harmony of feeling is essential to proper social worship. If the head of the family be conscious that he has ill-treated his wife, let him heed the admonition of our Lord. See note on Matt. v. 23, 24.

8. *Be ye all of one mind.* See note on Rom. xii. 16. ¶ *Having compassion, &c.* See note on Rom. xii. 10. ¶ *Be pitiful.* "Tender-hearted. — The meaning is, be moved with compassion on beholding the weaknesses and dis-

10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

tresses of others, and do what ye can to assist them." — *Macknight*. ¶ *Be courteous.* Affable, kind, pleasant in deportment.

9. *Not rendering evil for evil, &c.* See notes on Matt. v. 39, 44. ¶ *That ye should inherit a blessing.* That is, that by rendering love for hatred, and good for evil, ye may become children of God and heirs of spiritual blessings. See notes on Matt. v. 45; Rom. viii. 17.

10-12. *For he that will love life, &c.* Substantially quoted from Ps. xxxiv. 12-16. Long life is an object of common desire, and is recognized in the Jewish law as a reward of obedience. The same idea is suggested here. ¶ *Let him eschew evil.* Let him shun it, avoid it. ¶ *Let him seek peace and ensue it.* "Follow it; that is, practise it. The meaning is, that a peaceful spirit will contribute to length of days. (1.) A peaceful spirit, a calm, serene, and equal temper of mind, is favorable to health, avoiding those corroding and distracting passions which do so much to wear out the physical energies of the frame; and (2.) such a spirit will preserve us from those contentions and strifes to which so many owe their death." — *Barnes*. ¶ *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, &c.* He approves and protects them. ¶ *The face of the Lord is against, &c.* He judges evil-doers. Righteousness, therefore, naturally tends to the preservation of life. Of course it is not to be understood that the righteous always attain old age, and that the wicked are always cut off in their prime. Yet there is a sense

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear:

in which the path of uprightness and truth, of righteousness and peace, leads to length of days.

13. *And who is he that will harm you, &c.* See note on Rom. viii. 31. If ye cleave to that which is good, the eyes of the Lord behold us, his ears hear us, ver. 12, and we may safely confide in him for protection.

14. *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake.* Even though, for wise purposes, God permits his obedient children to endure persecution and affliction, he will make all such sufferings conducive to their highest good. See notes on Matt. v. 11, 12; Heb. xii. 11. ¶ *Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.* Be not dismayed when they attempt to terrify you, nor troubled when they afflict you. Confide in God, that he will preserve you in the midst of all perils; at the least, that he will preserve your soul, whatever may befall the body. See note on John xiv. 1.

15. *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.* See Isa. viii. 13. "That is, in order to keep the mind calm in trials, sanctify the Lord in your hearts; regard him as your holy God and Saviour; make him your refuge. This will allay all your fears, and secure you from all that you dread. The sentiment of this passage, then, is, that the sanctifying of the Lord God in our hearts, or proper confidence in him as a holy and righteous God, will deliver us from fear." — *Barnes*. ¶ *And be ready always to give an answer, &c.* Endeavor to understand the principles of the gospel and the grounds of your

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in

hope, so that you may give an intelligible answer to all inquirers, in a spirit of modesty and reverence towards God. Especially is this a duty of those who profess a doctrine everywhere spoken against. See notes on Acts iv. 7-9; xxvi. 2-6; xxviii. 22. Some suppose the reference here is to those who inquired judicially, and therefore interpret thus: "Whosoever there is occasion, confess God before men, and when you are asked, give an account of the hope and faith you profess, with all meekness to their authority, if they be your superiors, as kings and magistrates which are set over you, and with all care to approve yourselves to God." — *Hammnd*. This interpretation harmonizes with the references in ver. 14, 16, 17, to the persecutions endured by the early Christians.

16. *Having a good conscience.* That is, a conscience that does not upbraid or condemn. See notes on Acts xxiv. 16; Rom. ii. 15. ¶ *They may be ashamed, &c.* That is, that their accusations shall be so entirely groundless, and their evil speaking so clearly demonstrated to be false by your Christian conduct, that your adversaries may be filled with shame.

17. *For it is better, &c.* If you must suffer, it is better that you have the approval of your own conscience than its condemnation. 1 John iii. 20, 21. See note on ch. ii. 19, 20.

18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, &c.* See notes on Matt. viii. 17; Heb. ix. 28. Christ suffered

the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and

pain and death in the glorious work of turning men from sinfulness to the love and practice of holiness. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8. He was just and we are unjust; yet he suffered in the effort to benefit us. But we are not to suppose that he suffered the punishment due to sin, for he was "without sin," Heb. iv. 15; and it does not accord with the justice of God, that the righteous should be treated as guilty, and be made to endure punishment which they do not deserve. See Ezek. xviii. 20; Rom. ii. 6-11. ¶ *That he might bring us to God.* See note on John xii. 32. ¶ *Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* See notes on Rom. i. 4; 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

19, 20. *By which.* Namely, by that divine Spirit which demonstrated him "to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4. ¶ *He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.* The Roman Church rely on this declaration in proof of the doctrine of purgatory and deliverance from its pains by the ministry of Christ; and many Protestants rely on it with equal confidence, in proof that many are confined in the prison of hell, from which they shall never be delivered, but where they shall endure endless pain, notwithstanding the efforts which Christ once made on their behalf. But the passage is susceptible of two other interpretations: (1.) That Christ preached, by the ministry of Noah, to the antediluvians, when they were shut up or consigned to the destruction about to overwhelm the whole world; and (2.) That Christ preached, by the ministry of his disciples, to the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, under bondage to sin, and like the antediluvians shut up or consigned to "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to

preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were dis-

this time, no, nor ever shall be." Matt. xxiv. 21. For obvious reasons, I prefer to give both interpretations in the language of learned and devout men, who believed that many shall endure endless imprisonment and pain, but did not believe that such a doctrine is taught in this passage. "But touching the words of St. Peter is the main doubt; whether they are to be referred unto Christ's preaching by the ministry of Noah unto the world of the ungodly, or unto his own immediate preaching to the spirits in hell after his death upon the cross. For seeing it was the spirit of Christ which spake in the prophets, as St. Peter sheweth in this same epistle, ch. i. 11, and among them was Noah, a 'preacher of righteousness,' as he declareth in the text, 2 Pet. ii. 5, even as in St. Paul, Christ is said, Eph. ii. 17, to have come and preached to the Ephesians, namely by his spirit in the mouth of his apostles; so likewise in St. Peter may he be said to have gone and preached to the old world, by his spirit in the mouth of his prophets, and of Noah in particular, when God, having said that his spirit should not always strive with man, because he was flesh, Gen. vi. 3, did in his long suffering wait the expiration of the time which he then did set for his amendment, even an hundred and twenty years. Thus doth St. Jerome relate, that a most prudent man (for so he termeth him) did understand this place. 'He preached to the spirits put in prison, when the patience of God did wait in the days of Noah, bringing in the flood upon the wicked;' as if this preaching were then performed, when the patience of God did expect the conversion of those wicked men in the days of Noah. St. Augustine more directly wisheth us to consider, lest haply all that which the Apostle Peter speaketh of the spirits shut up in prison, which believed not in the days of Noah,

obedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the

days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few,

pertain nothing at all unto hell, but rather to those times which he compareth as a pattern with our times. For 'Christ,' saith he, 'before ever he came in the flesh to die for us, which once he did, came often before in the spirit to such as he pleased, admonishing them by visions in the spirit as he pleased; by which spirit he was also quickened, when in his passion he was mortified in the flesh.' Venerable Bede, and Walafridus Strabus, in the Ordinary Gloss, after him, set down their minds herein yet more resolutely: 'He who, in our times, coming in the flesh, preached the way of life unto the world, even he himself also before the flood, coming in the spirit, preached unto them which then were unbelievers and lived carnally. For by his holy spirit he was in Noah and the rest of the holy men which were at that time; and by their good conversation preached to the wicked men of that age, that they might be converted to a better course of life.' The same exposition is followed by Anselmus Londunensis in the Interlineary Gloss, Thomas Aquinas, in his Sum, and divers others in their Commentaries upon this place." — *Abp. Usher*. "The phrase, *went and preached*, or, *going preached*, is but an idiom of the sacred style, wherein *going* and such like words are frequently used as expletives; so, to omit many more, Eph. ii. 17, speaking of Christ after his departure from the world (in the same manner as here before his coming into it), and of his preaching by his apostles, not personally himself, to the heathen world; St. Paul expresses it after the same manner as here, 'and he went and preached peace.' By his spirit is evidently here meant that divine power by which he was raised from the dead after his crucifixion, and by which he means now to act revenge on his crucifiers after a while, if they repent not, but in the mean time to preach repentance to them. And that makes the parallel exact be-

twixt the matter here in hand and the story of the old world. Here men are divided into two sorts, ver. 17, those that suffer for well-doing, the pious, constant, yet persecuted Christians, and those that shall suffer for evil-doing, the contumacious, obdurate, persecuting Jews and Gnostics, as there the violent and corrupt on one side, which were, after the hundred and twenty years, swept away with the deluge, and Noah and his family on the other side, who by being set forth as an example of the godly, 'delivered out of temptations,' 2 Pet. ii. 5, 9, appear to have been opposed and wronged by them. And therefore to prove, what was undertaken ver. 17, that even in respect of this world, it is far better to be of the number of the persecuted who shall be delivered, than of the most prosperous persecutors which shall after a time be destroyed, as the example of Christ was very pertinent, ver. 18, who, having suffered awhile, was raised in power to destroy the crucifiers, so the example of the old world is fitly made use of also," &c. — *Hammond*. In his Commentary, Archbishop Leighton interprets this passage to mean "that Jesus Christ did, before his appearing in the flesh, speak by his spirit in his servants to those of the foregoing ages," &c. But in a note he says: "Thus I *then* thought, but do *now* apprehend another sense as probable, if not more, even that so much rejected by most interpreters, the mission of the spirit, and preaching of the gospel by it, after his resurrection; preaching to sinners and converting them, according to the prophecy which he first fulfilled in person, and after more amply in his apostles. That prophecy, I mean, Isa. lxi. 1, *The spirit upon him*, and it was sent from him on his apostles, to preach to *spirits in prison*, to preach liberty to those *captives*, captive spirits; and therefore called *spirits in prison*, to illustrate the thing the more, by opposition to



that is, eight souls were saved by water.

that spirit of Christ, *the spirit of liberty*, setting them free; and this to show the greater efficacy of Christ's preaching than of Noah's, though he a signal preacher of righteousness, yet only himself and his family, eight persons, saved by him, but multitudes of all nations by the spirit and preaching of Christ in the gospel; and that by the seal of baptism, and the resurrection of Christ, represented in the return from the water, and our dying with him by immersion, and that figure of baptism like their ark."—"By those in prison we may understand the Gentile world in bondage and captivity to sin and Satan, and held in the chains of their own lusts, and in the bonds of their iniquity. For by this phrase the evangelical prophet doth thrice express the preaching of the gospel by our Lord Jesus Christ, as in those words, Isa. xlii. 7; xlix. 9; lxi. 1, 2. To this effect are all these places interpreted by St. Jerome, Theodoret, and Procopius, upon Isaiah, namely, of those Gentiles who were bound in the *chain of their sins*, and captivated by Satan."—*Whitby*. "He went, after he ascended into heaven, as in ver. 22; John xiv. 2, 3, 12, 28; xvi. 7, 28. Christ is said to have preached to the Gentiles, because the apostles did it in his name and by his authority, 2 Cor. v. 20; Acts xiii. 47; Rom. xv. 16; Gal. ii. 8; Eph. ii. 17. But because Peter would add a reference to the times of Noah, in order to show how much more successful was the ministry of Christ than that of Noah, he therefore takes the words from that history. For God says, Gen. vi. 3," &c.—*Grotius*. "Some suppose that, in this place, St. Peter speaks of the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, which work Jesus Christ commenced, and which the apostles in his name and by his spirit carried forward. They interpret the word *prison* to signify allegorically the shades of ignorance with which the Gentiles were enveloped before

21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save

they were called to faith in the gospel. Jesus Christ says, John v. 25, 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live;' which is interpreted to mean the calling of the Gentiles to faith. And, in Luke iv. 18, our Saviour applies to himself these words of Isaiah: 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted.' And Isaiah himself, speaking of the Messiah, says, ch. xlii. 6, 7, 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house;' which is generally understood to mean the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. St. Paul frequently alludes to this prison, this captivity, and these shades of darkness, in which the Gentiles were before they received the gospel. Eph. ii. 17; iv. 8; v. 8; Col. i. 13; 1 Thess. v. 4."—*Calmet*. And this exposition is said to be "sanctioned by the most learned interpreters." The destruction of the old world by the deluge, and the preservation of Noah and his family, "eight souls," in the ark, are related in Gen. vi., vii., viii. ¶ *Were saved by water*. The water which destroyed others bore up the ark and preserved its inmates.

21, 22. *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, &c.* "The apostle cannot have meant that water saves us in the same way in which it saved Noah, for that cannot be true. It is neither the same in quantity, nor is it applied in the same way, nor is it efficacious in the same manner. The meaning of this part of the verse, therefore, may be thus expressed: Noah and his family were saved by water, the antitype to which (to wit, that which in important respects corresponds to that), baptism (not the putting away of the

us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

filth of the flesh, or the mere application of material water, but that purifying of the heart of which it is the appropriate emblem), now saves us."

— *Barnes*. Baptism may thus be regarded as emblematical and significant of salvation from the defilement of sin. But the form of the comparison indicates that the apostle here means rather to say, that as Noah and his family "were saved by water" from the temporal destruction which overwhelmed the old world, so those who were baptized as the disciples of Christ should be saved from a similar calamity then near at hand. The passage has been thus interpreted by very learned men. "The receiving of John's baptism signed and fenced those that received it from the ruin that was just coming. To this belongs that of St. Peter, Epist. I., ch. iii. 20, 21; in that manner as Noah and his sons were, by water, delivered from the flood, 'so also baptism now, the antitype of that type, saveth us' from the deluge of divine indignation. He magnifieth baptism as a badge and pledge of preservation of those, that had received it and stuck to it, from that vengeance that was coming upon that wicked nation. It is something a strange recoiling that he makes, leaping back from mention of the death of Christ, ver. 18, over all the story of the Old Testament, and lighteth on the generation that was swept away by the flood, and sheweth how Christ's spirit preached unto them. Why, had not the same spirit preached in all the times between? Why, then, are not those times named as well as these? Because the apostle doth purposely intend to compare that old world then destroyed, with the destruction of the Jewish nation shortly coming, and to show that, as Noah and his family were then saved by water, ver. 20, so they that had received baptism were the antitype to that, and

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

baptism was a pledge and means of their deliverance *now*, they sticking closely to it. And this very thing John Baptist taught in that question, 'Who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come?' Therefore, when he calls 'an asking of a good conscience towards or after God,' he makes not this its definition, as if none but those so qualified were to be baptized; but he characterizes its difference from circumcision, which put away the filth of the flesh, in one sense, and legal Pharisaical washings, which did it in another. His whole comparison runs to this tenor: The old world was disobedient to the spirit of Christ preaching in the mouth of Noah, and therefore they perished. The Jews, whose state the Scripture also calleth 'an old world,' were disobedient to Christ, preaching by his spirit in the mouth of his apostles, and even visibly and audibly in his own person; therefore they must needs perish. But Noah and his family, that hearkeneth after God, while others said to the Lord, 'Depart from us,' were preserved by water; even so doth baptism now preserve us, the antitype of that figure. For baptism was not barely a washing of the body from filth, as the common legal washings were; but it was an owning and asking after God, conscientiously, out from a perverse and wicked generation; and therefore not to be started or revolted from." — *Lightfoot*. How baptism, or faith in Christ of which it was a sign, was conducive to preservation from "the wrath to come" on the Jewish state and nation, is indicated in notes on Matt. x. 22; xvi. 25; 1 Thess. v. 1-3. "Since that resurrection, Christ is now ascended to heaven, to undertake the ruling of all things (all power both of angels and men being given unto him), and to subdue and bring down the disobedient of both sorts, the very devils and the

## CHAPTER IV.

**F**ORASMUCH then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the

heathen persecutors (as the villany and violence of the old world was brought down by God in the deluge), so far at least that whatever befalls us from them shall be rather to our advantage than otherwise, which was the thing the apostle had to prove by the example of Christ, ver. 17, and is now resumed and proceeded in, ch. iv. 1."—*Hammond*.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh.* Since he has laid down his life for us. See note on ch. iii. 18. ¶ *Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.* Be ready and willing to encounter any peril, even to the sacrifice of life, in defence of the truth, and for the benefit of your fellow-men. ¶ *For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.* "To 'suffer in the flesh' is to die. The expression here has a proverbial aspect, and seems to have meant something like this: 'when a man is dead, he will sin no more;' referring of course to the present life."—*Barnes*. There is nothing, however, in the apostle's language which limits its application to "the present life;" on the contrary, like the similar declaration of Paul, it is general and absolute. See note on Rom. vi. 7. So, in a qualified sense, Christians are represented as already dead with Christ, crucified with him, buried with him by baptism unto death, and to the same extent free from the power of sin. See notes on Rom. vi. 1-6.

2. *That he no longer should live, &c.* See notes on Rom. vi. 11-14.

3. *The time past of our life may*

flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it

suffice us. We have sinned long enough. Not that it was right to live so long in sin; but that its evil consequences ought to induce men to forsake it altogether. ¶ *To have wrought the will of the Gentiles.* To have practised the vices which were common among the Gentiles. Some of those vices are enumerated in what follows. ¶ *Lasciviousness.* See notes on Rom. i. 26, 27; xiii. 13. ¶ *Lusts.* Unlawful desires. See note on Rom. i. 24. ¶ *Excess of wine, revellings, banquetings.* Intemperance and debauchery generally are indicated by these terms. See notes on Rom. xiii. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 10. ¶ *Abominable idolatries.* "Literally, unlawful idolatries; that is, unlawful to the Jews, or forbidden by their laws."—*Barnes*. "This, considering that the Jews were not guilty of idolatry properly so called, is supposed to have reference only to the Gentile converts; or to be meant to denote vices as bad as idolatry, or rather the practices usually connected with idolatry, and the falling into idolatrous and heathen manners, customs, and opinions, by participation, as we may imagine, in the heathen feasts to the honor of their gods."—*Bloomfield*.

4. *Wherein they think it strange, &c.* They do not understand why you have ceased to unite with them in the practice of the before-mentioned vices. ¶ *Speaking evil of you.* Greek, *blaspheming*. "The idea is not that they blasphemed God, or that they charged Christians with crime, but that they used language fitted to injure the feelings, the character, the reputation, of those who would no longer unite with them in the ways of vice and folly."—*Barnes*. See note on Matt. ix. 3.

strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you* :

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

6 For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them

5. *Who shall give account.* Who are accountable. See note on Rom. xiv. 12. ¶ *That is ready to judge.* Who will very soon make a visible display of his justice in the sight of men. See notes on ver. 7, 17; James v. 7-9. ¶ *The quick and the dead.* Those who have been quickened from moral death, and those who remain dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1. See note on Acts x. 42. Some, however, suppose the reference to be especially to the Gentiles, as dead in trespasses and sins, from which Christians had been quickened, and even the Jews had a name to live; and some refer the distinction absolutely to the Jews and Gentiles. "From the following verse it appears that by 'the dead,' the apostle meant the Gentiles, said, in other passages, to be dead through ignorance and sin; consequently, by 'the living' we are to understand those who, by their profession of the gospel, are reputed to be alive: Rev. iii. 1, 'Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.' See also 1 Tim. v. 6. The living and the dead, therefore, are the Jews and Gentiles."—*Macknight*. See note on ver. 6.

6. *For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, &c.* "Besides, to encourage you to suffer death for Christ, know that for this purpose the gospel hath been preached even to the dead in sins, Eph. ii. 1, to the Gentiles, to assure them that although they may be condemned to death indeed, by men in their fleshly body, as Christ was, yet they shall live eternally by the power of God in their spiritual body, as Christ now liveth."—*Macknight*. "The gospel was preached to you Gentiles, that, whatever may be the prejudices of worldly men, your souls may

that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

8 And above all things have

be purified by the graces of the gospel."—*Gilpin*. "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead (that is, to the Gentile world, dead in trespasses and sins), that they might be judged (might judge, condemn, and oppose their former life, led) according to men (not enlightened by the gospel) in the flesh, but (and might) live according to God in the spirit."—*Whitby*.

7. *But the end of all things is at hand.* "Not the end of the world, but of that city, nation, and economy; the like is that, Jas. v. 9, 'Behold the judge standeth before the door,' and divers others of the like nature."—*Lightfoot*. "This phrase, and the advice upon it, so exactly parallel to what our Lord had spoken, will not suffer us to doubt that the apostle is here speaking, not of the end of the world, or of all things in general, which was not then, and seems not yet to be at hand, but only of the end of the Jewish church and state, mentioned in the inquiry of the apostles, thus: 'Tell us when all these things shall be finished,' Mark xiii. 14; and in our Saviour's answer, thus: 'This generation shall not pass away till all things be fulfilled,' Luke xxi. 32; that is, *all these things*. Matt. xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 30."—*Whitby*. ¶ *Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.* That is, lest ye be overwhelmed in the general calamity, ver. 17, 18. So our Lord cautioned his disciples to be sober, and watchful and prayerful, in order to escape the destruction then about to befall the Jewish nation. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 37-51. "But that great fatal destruction to the obdurate Jews, so oft spoken of by Christ and his apostles, is now near at hand, which is an obligation to all care in performing all

fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

acts of piety, in praying for the averting of God's wrath, and securing you from being overwhelmed in it; and to that end there is nothing so necessary as sobriety, in opposition to the sins forenamed, ver. 3, 4, and care and vigilance that the day of visitation come not on you unawares." — *Hammond*. "This is the advice our Lord gave to his disciples when he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, Luke xxi. 36. The word *νήφατε* signifies both *to be sober* and *to watch*. In this passage it signifies *to watch*, because it follows a word which signifies *to be sober*; and both are necessary preparations for prayer, which, to those who might have occasion to go to Jerusalem, the apostle recommended as the best means of avoiding the calamities that were coming on that devoted city." — *MacKnight*. See note on 1 Thess. v. 1-3.

8. *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves.* Especially, love each other fervently. See note on 1 Cor. xiii. 1. ¶ *For charity shall cover the multitude of sins.* "Meaning, according to the import of the passage of Prov. x. 12, from which the present is derived, this charitable disposition will lead us to throw a cloak over and forgive a multitude of offences in others against ourselves." — *Bloomfield*.

9. *Use hospitality, &c.* See note on Rom. xii. 13.

10. *As every man hath received the gift.* Or, endowment, or ability to do good to others. All which we possess should be regarded as a gift from the "Father of lights." Jas. i. 17. ¶ *Even so minister the same one to another.* This exhortation is similar to that in Gal. vi. 10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all

11 If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 Beloved, think it not

men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." This duty is incumbent on all men. Matt. vii. 12; xxii. 37-40. But in the time of trouble, and persecution, and peril, existing when the apostle wrote, it was especially important that the disciples of Christ should render to each other all possible aid and encouragement, whether the manifestation of love, ver. 8, or supplies for their bodily necessities, ver. 9, or advice in regard to their temporal or spiritual affairs, ver. 11. ¶ *As good stewards, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. Whatever God has graciously bestowed freely impart to others.

11. *If any man speak, &c.* The general idea in this verse is, that whoever assumes the position of a religious teacher should carefully study and honestly declare the oracles of God. For so much, according to his ability, he is responsible to God. See notes on Rom. xii. 6-8. ¶ *That God in all things may be glorified.* Be honored by men; that is, by their just ideas of his character, gratitude to him for his goodness, and kindness to each other in imitation of him. ¶ *Through Jesus Christ.* The medium through whom God has communicated to his children the gracious influences of his Spirit, enabling them to learn and to perform their duties to him and to each other. ¶ *To whom, &c.* "That is, to God, for he is the main subject of the sentence. The apostle says that in all things he is to be glorified by us, and then adds in this doxology that he is worthy to be thus honored." — *Barnes*.

12. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, &c.* "Brethren, be not amazed or much troubled at the terrible fire of persecution and affliction."

strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on

their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters.

16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end

tion which is among you at this time; it is that which God sends for your trial, and it is no strange or new thing to have such things befall Christians."

—Hammond. "The word *πύρωσις*, *burning*, denotes the grievous persecution which the Christians in Pontus, &c., were suffering for their faith. The metaphor is bold, but noble. It represents them as having fire cast on them for the trial of their faith, as gold is tried by fire, ch. i. 7, to which the apostle alludes. The figure in a lively manner expresses the painful and dangerous nature of their trial." —Macknight. "Referring, doubtless, to some severe persecution which was then impending." —Barnes.

13. *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.* "That is, sufferings of the same kind that he endured, and inflicted for the same reasons. They were to regard it as a matter of rejoicing that they were identified with Christ, even in suffering." —Barnes. See Matt. v. 12; Rom. v. 3-5; 2 Cor. i. 7. ¶ *That when his glory shall be revealed, &c.* That is, when he shall come to administer that conspicuous and condign judgment, foretold by himself in Matt. xvi. 27, 28; xxiv. 29-35, and mentioned by Paul in 2 Thess. i. 6-10. The same event is indicated as immediately impending in ver. 5, 7, and in James v. 7-9. "There will be a glorious revelation and coming of Christ, that spoken of Matt. xxiv., to the destruction of those crucifiers of

Christ and persecutors of Christianity, after which you shall have a great calm and tranquillity, and that will be matter of exceeding joy to you." —Hammond.

14. *If ye be reproached, &c.* See notes on Matt. v. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 10. ¶ *On their part he is evil spoken of, &c.* See notes on ch. ii. 12; iii. 16.

15, 16. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, &c.* See note on ch. ii. 19, 20. ¶ *Let him glorify God on this behalf.* See note on Acts v. 41.

17, 18. *For the time is come that judgment must begin, &c.* "That is, the time foretold by our Saviour is now at hand, in which we are to be delivered up to persecution, &c. These words denote that persecution which the Jews, now near their ruin, stirred up almost everywhere against the professors of the gospel. In that persecution James suffered at Jerusalem, Peter in Babylon, and Antipas at Pergamus; and others, as it is probable, in not a few other places." —Lightfoot. "For the time is come that judgment must, according to our Lord's prediction (Matt. xxiv. 21, 22; Mark xiii. 13; Luke xxi. 16, 17), begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, believing Jews, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if some of the righteous scarcely be saved, that is, preserved from this *burning*, ver. 12, being saved, yet so as by fire, 1 Cor. iii. 15, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear, in safety from

be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of

their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.

## CHAPTER V.

THE elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and

those dreadful judgments which are coming on the Jewish nation? Prov. xi. 31."—*Whitby*. "Thus, amidst the general ruin which is coming upon these wicked times, the Christian shall have his share. But his afflictions will be light in comparison of that great overthrow which shall destroy the Jewish nation."—*Gilpin*. "If the righteous be scarcely able to escape in these days of wrath, what shall be the fate of the ungodly? When God began to exercise vengeance upon the Jews, he first permitted the Christians to suffer many afflictions, and after he had purified his church, and proved the virtue of his elect, he admonished them to depart from Jerusalem and its borders, and to remove beyond Jordan. Ecclesiastical historians relate that they retired to Pella, under the protection of King Agrippa, a friend and ally of the Romans, to which place the violence of the war did not extend. But the remaining Jews experienced the fury and the power of their conquerors, who levelled the temple and Jerusalem itself with the ground, even ploughing the earth on which it stood, and slew eleven hundred thousand of the Jews. St. Peter alludes to Prov. xi. 31, 'If the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner.' The apostle follows the Septuagint version."—*Calmet*.

19. *Wherefore, let them that suffer, &c.* Bear patiently every burden which God imposes, and trust him for the result. He who protects the sparrows will not suffer you to be harmed. See this argument enforced by our Lord, Matt. x. 28–31. The sense of the verse is sufficiently well expressed in an ancient paraphrase: "By all

this it appears to be most reasonable, that they that suffer in Christ's cause bear it patiently and quietly, never doing or attempting any unlawful thing to cast the cross off from their own shoulders, but committing their lives and everything to God, who, having created all, and so being able to preserve them as easily if he please, and being most certain to perform all his promises to every faithful servant of his, will certainly preserve them if it be best for them, and, if he do not, will make their sufferings a passage to and enhancement of their glory."—*Hammond*.

## CHAPTER V.

1. *The elders.* The ministers, or spiritual teachers and guides. See note on Acts xiv. 23. ¶ *Who am also an elder.* Literally fellow-presbyter, *συμπρεσβύτερος*. "This word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means that he was a co-presbyter with them; and he makes this one of the grounds of his exhortation to them. He does not put it on the ground of his apostolical authority; or urge it because he was the 'vicegerent of Christ;' or because he was the head of the church; or because he had any pre-eminence over others in any way. Would he have used this language if he had been the 'head of the church' on earth? Would he, if he supposed that the distinction between apostles and other ministers was to be perpetuated? Would he, if he believed that there were to be distinct orders of clergy? The whole drift of this passage is adverse to such a supposition."—*Barnes*. ¶ *A witness of the sufferings*

also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

*of Christ.* He had been his personal companion from the commencement of his ministry, Matt. iv. 17-20, witnessed the many painful labors performed, and persecutions and indignities suffered by him, and very probably witnessed also his crucifixion. ¶ *A partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.* By most commentators this is referred to the glory which awaits mankind at the resurrection. Doubtless Peter had a confident hope of sharing that glory; yet it may be doubted whether he refers to it here. Our Lord often predicted a revelation or manifestation of his glory which should be witnessed on earth by some who heard him. Matt. xvi. 27, 28; xxiv. 29-35; Luke xxi. 27-33. In the place last cited, our Lord represents that the destruction which should overwhelm his adversaries at this revelation of his glory would be a means of relief to his friends, or deliverance from persecution. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke xxi. 30. The apostles frequently refer to the same fact. See notes on 2 Thess. i. 6-10. In this sense Peter speaks of the revelation of Christ's glory as productive of joy to his disciples, ch. iv. 13; and the appearance of the "chief Shepherd," ver. 4, seems to indicate the same event. Hence it seems reasonable to suppose that the apostle here refers to the same revelation of glory on the earth, rather than to the glory which shall accompany and follow the resurrection of the dead. The text was so understood by a learned writer, who para-

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

phrased it thus: I am "one that attended Christ at his crucifixion, and was also at his transfiguration present at that discourse concerning the glory that should be consequent to his death, see 2 Pet. i. 16, the remarkable destruction of his crucifiers and deliverance of his faithful disciples. See note on 2 Thess. i. 6." — *Hammond.*

2. *Feed the flock of God, &c.* Peter received a similar charge from the "chief Shepherd." See notes on John xxi. 15-17; Acts xx. 28. ¶ *Not by constraint, but willingly.* See note on 1 Cor. ix. 17. ¶ *Not for filthy lucre, &c.* See note on 1 Cor. ix. 18.

3. *Neither as being lords over God's heritage, &c.* See notes on 1 Cor. iii. 9; 2 Cor. i. 24. "From this prohibition it would seem that, in the apostle's days, the bishops were beginning to assume that dominion over their flocks which, in after times, they carried to the greatest height of tyranny. Or St. Peter, by inspiration foreseeing what was to happen, condemned in this prohibition the tyranny which, in after times, the clergy exercised." — *Macknight.*

4. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear.* This probably refers to the same appearance, or glorious manifestation or revelation, then very near at hand, which is indicated in ch. iv. 5, 7, 13, and in ver. 1, of this chapter. ¶ *Ye shall receive a crown of glory.* You shall then be gloriously distinguished from others; for while your oppressors shall be utterly overwhelmed and destroyed, you shall be saved, according to the prediction of our Lord, Luke xxi. 18.

5. *Likewise ye younger, &c.* The



6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

general lesson inculcated in this verse is the duty of Christians to be respectful in their behavior, and to be humble in view of their own shortcomings and imperfections, not attempting to be "lords" over others, as in ver. 3. See note on Jas. iv. 6.

6. *Humble yourselves therefore, &c.* See note on Jas. iv. 9, 10.

7. *Casting all your care upon him, &c.* You may trust him implicitly and unreservedly; for he careth for you even more tenderly than you care for your own children. Matt. vii. 9-11; x. 29-31.

8. *Be sober, be vigilant.* Circumspection and watchfulness were indispensable to safety, in the perilous time then near at hand, even at the door. The apostle repeats to his brethren the same admonition which he and his fellow-disciples received from their Master, in regard to the same perils. See Luke xxi. 31-36. ¶ *Because your adversary the devil, &c.* Peter desired to warn his brethren and to fortify their minds against "the temptation to apostatize and abandon their Christian profession."—*Bloomfield*. Any influence brought to bear on their minds tending to shake their faith in Christ, or to induce them to renounce him in the hope of escaping present or apprehended evils, might properly be called *διάβολος*, or adversary, the devil. See note on Jas. iv. 7. The reference here is probably to the unbelieving Jews, or Judaizing Christians, or Gnostics, or all of them, who urged the true disciples to renounce or conceal their faith, as a means to secure their personal safety. "By this adversary, or

9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

devil, we may understand the enemies of Christianity in general, Jews or heathen, who were always watching to surprise and injure the Christians."—*Priestley*. The sacred writers often apply this term to human beings. It is applied to men, 2 Tim. iii. 3, and translated *false accusers*, and to women, 1 Tim. iii. 11, and translated *slanders*, and Titus ii. 3, *false accusers*. See notes on Matt. iv. 1; xiii. 19; John viii. 44.

9. *Whom resist steadfast in the faith.* Be not intimidated by them; but "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." Jude 3. However they may attempt to seduce or terrify, remember that you will the most surely secure your own safety by adherence to Christ and his gospel. ¶ *Knowing that the same afflictions, &c.* "For your encouragement to constancy, you cannot but know that you are not the only sufferers in the world, but that the Christians at Rome and in other places suffer in the very same manner that you do."—*Hammond*. Others endure the "same afflictions" without being induced to apostatize; be ye also steadfast in the profession of your faith. A similar exhortation is found in 1 Cor. x. 13.

10. *But the God of all grace, &c.* In all seasons of trial and danger, God should be recognized as the fountain of grace, who will dispense to his children such supplies as they need. To him the apostle directs the attention of his brethren, that they might feel secure under his protection. ¶ *Who hath called us unto his eternal glory, &c.* "And who means, therefore, that we shall be saved. As he has called us to

11 To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

his glory, we need not apprehend that he will leave us or forsake us." — *Barnes*. ¶ *After that ye have suffered awhile*. See note on ch. i. 5-7. ¶ *Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you*. The apostle, doubtless, believed that the "God of all grace" would make his children perfect in holiness, by purifying them from all iniquity; but in this place he seems rather to indicate perfect courage and constancy in the midst of persecution and danger. This interpretation best agrees with the general theme of discourse. "May God, the author of all goodness, who hath called us to the enjoyment of his eternal happiness, by Christ Jesus, after ye have suffered a while, himself make you complete in the virtues, support you in the exercise of them, strengthen you to resist temptation, and settle you in the profession of the gospel." — *Macknight*. "But the same God of all mercy and consolation, who, by revealing Christianity to you, hath advanced you to a capacity and (if ye be not wanting to yourselves) to the possession of his eternal glory, through the sufferings of Christ, by his special providence restore you to a peaceable, quiet condition of serving him, after these your dispersions are over, and by that means confirm you to hold out to the end." — *Hammond*.

11. *To him be glory, &c.* See note on ch. iv. 11.

12. *By Silvanus*. Otherwise called

13 The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.

14 Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Silas. See note on 2 Cor. i. 19. ¶ *A faithful brother, as I suppose*. This phrase does not necessarily imply any doubt in the mind of the apostle. The word λογίζομαι is often used by Paul, and is variously translated, *conclude*, Rom. iii. 28; *counted*, Rom. iv. 5; *reckon*, Rom. viii. 18; *imputing*, 2 Cor. v. 19. It might not improperly be here translated, *I fully believe*. ¶ *This is the true grace of God wherein ye stand*. "That the religion in which you stand, or which you now hold, is that which is identified with the grace or favor of God. Christianity, not Judaism or Paganism, was the true religion." — *Barnes*.

13. *The church that is at Babylon*. Commentators are divided in opinion whether Babylon is to be understood literally as indicating the ancient city of that name, or figuratively as indicating Rome. It is of little practical importance to us which opinion is correct. ¶ *Elected together with you*. See note on ch. i. 2. ¶ *Marcus, my son*. Generally supposed to be John Mark, a former companion of Paul and of Barnabas. See note on Acts xii. 12.

14. *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity*. Or, a kiss of love. A common form of salutation in the apostolic age. See note on Rom. xvi. 16. ¶ *Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus*. With all the disciples of Christ, or with all Christians. See notes on Rom. i. 7; xv. 13, 33.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

### CHAPTER I.

**S**IMON Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the

### CHAPTER I.

1. *Simon Peter, &c.* See note on Matt. x. 2; xvi. 18. Notwithstanding the doubts which prevailed to some extent in the early age of the church, it is now generally admitted that this epistle was written by the apostle whose name it bears. In style it resembles his First Epistle, and it was addressed to the same persons. See ch. iii. 1. It was probably written soon after the former, not far from A.D. 66, and not more than four or five years before the destruction of Jerusalem, to which frequent reference is made. ¶ *To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.* "With us who are of Jewish origin. This epistle was evidently written to the same persons as the former, and that was intended to embrace many who were of Gentile origin. The apostle addresses them all now, whatever was their origin, as heirs of the common faith, and as in all respects brethren." — *Barnes.* ¶ *Through the righteousness of God, &c.* Through the righteousness revealed in the gospel of the grace of God. See note on Rom. i. 17.

2. *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you.* May grace and peace be im-

knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and pre-

parted abundantly. See note on Rom. i. 7. ¶ *Through the knowledge of God.* Grace and divine knowledge grow together. Ch. iii. 18. See note on John xvii. 3.

3. *According as his divine power hath given unto us, &c.* "All the effects of the gospel on the human heart are in the Scriptures traced to the power of God. There are no moral means which have ever been used that have such power as the gospel; none through which God has done so much in changing the character and affecting the destiny of man. The reference here in the word *life* is undoubtedly to the life of religion, the life of the soul implanted by the gospel. The word *godliness* is synonymous with piety." — *Barnes.* See note on Rom. i. 16. ¶ *To glory and virtue.* "To glory in heaven, and virtue on earth. Or, *by glory and virtue*; that is, by a glorious and powerful gospel. So *δα* is used, Rom. vi. 4. Or, employing his glorious power to convert us, Eph. i. 19, and iii. 6." — *Assemb. Annot.*

4. *Whereby.* By the same glorious energy or divine power which has communicated the spiritual blessings mentioned in ver. 3. ¶ *Exceeding great and precious promises.* "They

cious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And besides this, giving all diligence add to your faith virtue: and to virtue, knowledge;

6 And to knowledge, temper-

ance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness;

7 And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the

are called 'exceeding great and precious,' because of their value in supporting and comforting the soul, and of the honor and felicity which they unfold to us. The promises referred to are doubtless those which are made in connection with the plan of salvation revealed in the gospel, for there are no other promises made to man. They refer to the pardon of sin; strength, comfort, and support, in trial; a glorious resurrection, and a happy immortality." — *Barnes*. ¶ *That by these*. Through the influence of these "exceeding great and precious promises." ¶ *Ye might be partakers of the divine nature*. "Not of God's substance, which is incommunicable; but have excellent graces given us, whereby we are made like to God in wisdom and holiness, wherein the image of God, after which man was at first created, consists. Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10." — *Assemb. Annot.* Probably the same participation, or likeness, or oneness, of divine nature is indicated, which our Lord prayed might be wrought on behalf of all who should believe in him. John xvii. 20-23. ¶ *Having escaped the corruption, &c.* Being saved from sin, Matt. i. 21; John i. 29; turned away from iniquity, Acts iii. 26; Tit. ii. 14.

5-9. *And besides this*. "Here is the apodosis to ver. 3, and the full sense (rather implied than expressed) is, so this very thing, which God hath given you ability to perform, do ye; that is to say, since God has granted all the means of holiness, ver. 3, 4, do your part; thus suggesting what they are to render in return for God's mercy, as shown by his thus calling

them to salvation, and (as is intimated by the words following) in co-operation with God's grace enabling them 'both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' Phil. ii. 12, 13." — *Bloomfield*. The exhortation which follows is so plain, that it scarcely seems to need any illustration. The following paraphrase, however, may be perused with profit: "(5.) It is necessary that you be very careful and diligent, that constancy, courage, perseverance, be superstructed on your profession of the Christian faith; that knowledge of mysteries be joined to that courage, and that it supplant it not; (6.) That strict continence be one thing that accompanies that knowledge; then to that continence, in avoiding the pollutions of the flesh, a cheerful patience or resolution of bearing whatsoever may fall on you from the enemies of your profession, whether Jews or false heretical Christians; to that patience, piety, and frequenting of the public service of God, not giving over the assembly, as some of the Hebrews did, Heb. x. 25, to avoid persecution; (7.) Then to your piety, kindness to all your fellow-Christians (contrary to the fiery contentions and factions among them, caused by the Gnostics); and to that kindness to your fellow-Christians, perfect charity to all men, even your enemies and persecutors. (8.) For the practice of these virtues, especially if they be in you in any eminent degree, will render you good and faithful servants of Christ and such as becomes your Christian profession. (9.) And he that falls back into any of those sins, contrary to those virtues, is like a purblind man

knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting king-

dom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

14 Knowing that shortly I

---

that cannot see things that are at a distance from him, thinks (through this fault in his eyes or forgetfulness in his understanding) that Christianity may give him liberty and license, as the Gnostics say it doth, whereas it was not long ago that Christianity called him out of these pollutions, and wrought this purification upon him, which is directly contrary thereunto."—*Hammond*.

10-21. *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, &c.* What follows in the remainder of this chapter is generally interpreted in reference to the welfare of the soul in the future life, and the most effectual method to secure that welfare. Yet there are good reasons for understanding the apostle to refer to the danger of apostasy and the importance of remaining steadfast in the faith. Some very learned commentators have perceived and acknowledged that such is the import of the passage, wholly, or in part. "As men's election to eternal life cannot be made more firm than it was at first, and as *calling* is here put before election, it is reasonable to think the apostle is here speaking of the brethren's calling and election to be the church and people of God, which they were to make firm by adding to their faith, courage, &c.; especially as it is said, 'if ye do these things, ye shall never at any time fall;' namely, from your election. Accordingly the word *fall* is used to signify the Jews as a nation, and

their falling from their privileges as the people of God. Rom. xi. 11."—*Macknight*. "Now it was time for those that were in Judea, who believed Christ's prediction, 'to get into the mountains,' and to shift for themselves; for now begins the tribulation beyond parallel, 'such as was not since the beginning of the world, nor ever must again.' Matt. xxiv. 21.—About these times, therefore, we may well conceive to have been the writing of the second epistle of Peter; and that the rather from what he speaks in ch. i. 14, 'I know that I must shortly put off this tabernacle, as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.' In which words, his thoughts reflect upon what Christ had spoken to John and him about their ends; where he not only gave intimation to Peter that he should be martyred, but that he should be so before his coming in judgment against Jerusalem, which John must live to see, but he must not. John xxi. 18-22. He therefore in Babylon, understanding how affairs went in Judea and with the Jewish nation all thereabout, and reading therein from the words of his Master, Matt. xxiv., that the desolation was drawing on apace, concludes that his time was not long, and therefore improves the time he hath remaining the best he can, not only in teaching those amongst whom he was, but by writing this epistle instructeth those that were remote and at distance from him; in which he doth more especially give them caution

must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

15 Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory,

against false teachers, and characters the terror of the judgment coming, and exhorts to vigilancy and holiness."—*Lightfoot*. In harmony with the interpretation thus indicated, the whole passage has been paraphrased thus: (10.) "This, brethren, must oblige and engage you to all care and diligence to make God's mercies in calling you to be Christians and designing you deliverances effectual to you. This must be done by your vigilancy over yourselves, that you relapse not into those former sins from which you came out at your conversion to Christ; which if you do, you shall never miscarry or forfeit that great benefit of being Christians, and of being that remnant that should now be delivered, when the rest of the Jews that believe not shall be destroyed. (11.) For by this means you shall be capable of being the men of which the kingdom of Christ shall be made up, that kingdom which begins in the vengeance executed on the unbelieving impenitent Jews, and in delivering the believers, and shall last most gloriously forever in subduing of enemies, and delivering of disciples. (12.) The vastness of your concerns herein makes me thus solicitous to inculcate these things unto you; not that I think you ignorant in this point of doctrine concerning the method that shall be used by Christ in erecting his kingdom here on earth, namely, by coming in ven-

when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts:

geance on the obdurate, and delivering the constant, persevering Christians; for I am sure you have been taught it over and over again, and sufficiently instructed and satisfied in the truth of it. (13.) But I think it not amiss, as long as I live in this world, or in this flesh, to be your remembrancer, and refresh these notions, stir up that knowledge which is already in you. (14.) Knowing that the time of my dissolution now suddenly approacheth, according as Christ, when he foretold of some that should survive this coming of his to the destruction of the Jews, which I now speak of, gave an intimation to me that I should not, John xxi. 18, 22, and positively affirmed that I should be crucified, as ere long I expect to be. (15.) And therefore I being to die before this comes to pass, but many of you likely to live to see it, it is my duty and purpose by this epistle to fix it in you, that when I am dead and gone you may remember this certain truth of Christ's kingdom and coming to destroy the Jewish unbelievers and crucifiers, and to preserve and rescue the believers among them. See ch. ii. 9. (16.) For they are not fancies or deceivable arguments upon which we have grounded this doctrine concerning Christ's coming in power to the destruction of his enemies and rescuing of believers, but the very things which we saw adumbrated, and heard discoursed on

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as *they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

by Moses and Elias, when I and James and John were with Christ on Mount Tabor, and saw the majesty that was instated on him at his transfiguration. (17.) For at the time of his receiving that majesty from the Father by way of vision, foretelling what should soon be instated on him, there was a voice which came out of that shining cloud, Matt. xvii. 5, and with it these words: 'Thou art my beloved Son,' &c., which signified God's design of instating the kingdom on him. (18.) And I also with James and John heard this voice which came out of the cloud, being then with him on that mount, where he was transfigured, and which by the evident presence of God by his angels there became a holy place. (19.) And beside these adumbrations by way of vision in the mount, we have many prophecies in the Old Testament concerning this matter, ver. 12, of the destruction of the Jews and preserving of a remnant, which, together with Christ's predictions, Matt. xxiv., are a more firm, sure, infallible argument to us than any other. And it is well done of you to study and observe these prophecies, which may stay your hearts in this state of affliction and persecution, until that day of your deliverance come, or until the forerunners of it, Luke xxi. 28, begin to show themselves unto you. (20.) This being a principle known to all, that no Scripture-prophecy is without particular mission and appointment from God; that which the prophets have there foretold being not the suggestions of their own spirits, what they thought good, but what God inspired and moved them to by his spirits coming upon them. (21.) For none of the prophets of any

## CHAPTER II.

**B**UT there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the

time have undertaken that office on their own heads, or prophesied their own fancies or persuasions, but all the Scripture-prophets have been men called and sent by God on his messages, and inspired and instructed by the Holy Spirit of God, every word which they have delivered. And therefore you cannot run any hazard in depending upon that which they have foretold shall come to pass in these which they called the last days, Joel ii. 28-32, and in many other places." — *Hammond*.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *But there were false prophets also among the people.* Although the true prophets "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," ch. i. 21, there were others who falsely pretended to be inspired messengers of God. ¶ *Even as there shall be false teachers among you.* "The sense is, 'There were, however, false prophets among the Israelitish people; and thus, too, will there be among you false teachers,' " &c. — *Bloomfield*. Or, "as there were false prophets under the law, so shall there be false teachers under the gospel." — *Gilpin*. Among the precursors of his glorious coming, then very near at hand, our Lord mentioned such *false teachers*. "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. xxiv. 24. Paul frequently alludes to the same class of deceivers, as appearing shortly before the same coming. Acts xx. 30; 1 Cor. xi. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 7-10; 1 Tim. iv. 1. So here, when predicting the near approach of that coming, it

Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by rea-

son of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:

was natural that Peter should refer to the character and fate of the same "false teachers." See note on Jude, ver. 4. ¶ *Damnable heresies*. Or, destructive heresies, a similar word being rendered *destruction* at the end of this verse. ¶ *Even denying the Lord that bought them*. See note on 1 Cor. vi. 20. The particular danger against which the apostle here endeavors to fortify his brethren is apostasy. There were those who were ready and who urged others to renounce Christ, or deny him, as a means of escaping persecution. ¶ *And bring upon themselves swift destruction*. Instead of escaping bodily peril, by apostasy, they should be overwhelmed in the general calamity then impending over the unbelieving nation of the Jews. See notes on Matt. xvi. 24-28. "That the apostatizing Jews did this, the Scripture everywhere informs us, and the apostles frequently warn them of it. St. Paul doth it throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, elsewhere speaking of them as men *whose end is destruction*, Phil. iii. 19; on whom should come *swift destruction*, they being appointed for wrath. 1 Thess. v. 3, 9. St. James, as of men *fattened for a day of slaughter*, and that suddenly to come upon them, their *judge standing at the door*. Jas. v. 5, 9." — *Whitby*.

2. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways*. "Or, lascivious ways, as some copies read." — *Margin*. This is supposed to be descriptive of the Nicolaitans, or the Gnostics, or both, two similar sects of heretics in the early age of the church. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 11, 24. ¶ *By reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of*. As the good conduct of men adorns the doctrine which they profess, Tit. ii. 10, and constrains men to speak well of it, so the hurtful doctrines and "pernicious ways" of "false teachers" bring into disrepute and

disgrace the cause to which they are ostensibly attached.

3. *And through covetousness, &c.* Through an inordinate desire for some personal advantage, whether pelf, or fame, or exemption from persecution, or aught else. See note on Rom. xvi. 18. ¶ *Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not*. The punishment denounced on the open enemies of the gospel, and on its false friends, was rapidly approaching. The Judge was even now standing at the door. Jas. v. 9. The hour was at hand when the faithful should be delivered from persecution and their enemies be destroyed. See notes on Luke xxi. 19-32. Those who sought to secure their personal safety by open apostasy, or by concealing or denying their faith in Christ, should soon reap the reward of their hypocrisy. See notes on Matt. xvi. 25, 26. "According to Christ's prediction, Matt. xxiv. 11, shall there be false teachers among you, namely, the Gnostic Christians, bringing into the true faith, under pretence of greater perfection, most destructive doctrines of liberty and licentiousness, and that count it an indifferent thing to deny Christ in time of persecution, and forswear him who redeemed them, that are thus unlike him as not to venture any danger for him who died for them, and do also by this means most imprudently incur the dangers which they desire (and pay so dear) to avoid by complying with the Jews, come to speedy destruction with them, according to that of Christ, Matt. xvi. 25." — *Hammond*. "By the *false teachers* who privily bring in damnable heresies, some suppose the apostle means the Nicolaitans, an abominable sect mentioned Rev. ii. 6. Church history informs us that this sect was soon extinguished. Whoever they were, they seem from many passages in this chapter to have been



whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the

eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Christians, to have held heretical opinions, and to have propagated their tenets. The *swift destruction* seems to correspond with the destruction of Jerusalem." — *Gilpin*. "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not. St. Jude, in the parallel place, ver. 4, saying, they were men of old assigned to this condemnation, namely, by the prophecy of Enoch, I think these words may be best rendered thus: 'To whom the judgment pronounced of old lingereth not,' it being a swift destruction which the false teachers among the Jews and the Nicolaitans brought upon themselves. Note, also, that their damnation is, in the Greek, *their destruction*." — *Whitby*.

4. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, &c. See note on Jude, ver. 6.

5. And spared not the old world. In ver. 4-8, the apostle refers to former manifestations of divine justice, indicating a fixed purpose to punish the ungodly, and to deliver the godly out of temptation or trial, ver. 9. This fact is urged as an encouragement to his brethren to be steadfast in the faith, and to possess their souls in patience, in the midst of the trials which beset them; confidently trusting in God for deliverance when "swift destruction" should overwhelm those false teachers and workers of iniquity, "whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." The history of the deluge which destroyed "the old world" is recorded in Gen. vi., vii., viii. ¶ But saved Noah the eighth person. The phrase 'Noah the eighth' means, Noah, one of eight; that is, Noah and seven others. This idiom

is found, says Dr. Bloomfield, in the best writers from Herodotus and Thucydides, downward. See examples in Wetstein." — *Barnes*. ¶ A preacher of righteousness. "By calling Noah a erier or herald of righteousness, Peter insinuates that, all the time Noah was preparing the ark, he proclaimed to the antediluvians the destruction of the world by a flood, that from the dread of that impending judgment of God they might be brought to repentance; like as Jonah proclaimed to the Ninevites the destruction of their city for the same purpose." — *Macknight*. Or perhaps an interpretation somewhat different may be preferred; differing, however, less in substance than in form: "Meaning, a herald to proclaim to the world tidings of the righteousness that is by faith, and of which it is said, Heb. xi. 7, that he was himself an heir." — *Bloomfield*. See note on 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. Noah was subject to the taunts and jeers and contumelious treatment of his ungodly contemporaries; but he was delivered from the calamity which overwhelmed them. So also might the faithful disciples of Christ hope for deliverance when their persecutors should be punished. Ver. 9.

6, 7. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, &c. See Gen. xix. 24-29. This destruction was by fire, as the other was by water. It was equally effectual; for the workers of iniquity were overwhelmed in one common and universal destruction. Even so small a number as ten righteous men could not be found in those polluted cities. Gen. xviii. 32. ¶ Making them an ensample. See notes

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked :

8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds :) :

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of tempta-

tion, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished :

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

11 Whereas angels, which

on 1 Cor. x. 6, 11; Jude 7. Our Lord referred to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, as an example of divine retribution, Matt. x. 15; xi. 24; and in Luke xvii. 28-30, as similar to that awful calamity which was impending over Jerusalem, to which the apostle manifestly refers, in this epistle, as very near at hand. ¶ *And delivered just Lot, &c.* Though ten righteous men could not be found in Sodom, there was one who feared God and wrought righteousness. At the least, he was comparatively "just" and "righteous;" and he was led out to a place of safety, before "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven," destroying "those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." Gen. xix. 24, 25. In like manner might the faithful hope for deliverance, when that unparalleled tribulation, predicted by our Lord, should overwhelm their persecutors. Ver. 9; Matt. xxiv. 21.

8. *For that righteous man, &c.* "Not that he had no sin in him, but because he endeavored to keep all God's commandments. Lot, dwelling among the wicked Sodomites, could not but daily see such filthy actions, and hear such unclean speeches, as vexed him to the very heart, because he loved God, whose name was dishonored grievously, and law broken grossly by them. Which way soever he turned his eyes or ears, he saw or heard something that did displease him. This vexed his soul greatly." — *Assemb. Annot.*

9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, &c.* Or, *out of trial.* In this verse, the apostle

announces the important fact, of which the foregoing verses furnish illustrations. "In the two members of which this sentence is composed, we have (as Calvin observes) a twofold answer returned, to quell the uneasy misgivings of the oppressed righteous, when they see the ungodly in such prosperity, 'flourishing like a green bay-tree,' while themselves seem abandoned to hopeless adversity. The apostle means to say, that if God punished *formerly* the wicked and preserved the good, he surely, in the exercise of his own wise providence, well knows how, in all future time, to punish the one and preserve the other, either by relieving them out of *trial* (for such is the import of *πειρασμοῦ*), or preserving them under it." — *Bloomfield.* In like manner our Lord assured his disciples that such as endured unto the end should be saved, and exhorted them to be courageous and hopeful when they should see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power and glory, to execute judgment upon their oppressors, saying, "Then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." See notes on Matt. x. 22; Luke xxi. 28.

10. *But chiefly them that walk after the flesh, &c.* "I would especially be understood to intend those who go after strange flesh, in the lust of uncleanness; for they are particularly detestable in the eye of God, and the crimes they commit so much resemble that of Sodom, that it is the less to be wondered if they share in its punishment; and with them I also comprehend those who despise dominion, of which there are many among the licentious wretches before described, daring and self-

are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

12 But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as

they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children :

willed, uncontrollable in their own ways, and ready to face and withstand any opposition in the prosecution of them; they fear not to speak evil of those who possess the highest dignities." — *Doddridge*. Some of the older commentators suppose this description is particularly applicable to the Gnostics, or the Nicolaitans.

11. *Whereas angels, &c.* See note on Jude 9.

12. *But these, as natural brute beasts, &c.* They manifest no more caution or prudence than the unreasoning beasts. They rush blindly on their own destruction, by speaking evil of their lawful rulers, ver. 10, and of the principles of government which they do not fully comprehend; and their corrupt and rebellious conduct will hasten the ruin which awaits them. Josephus assures us that the Jews exasperated their Roman rulers beyond endurance by their rash and unreasonable language, as well as by their overt acts of sedition and rebellion. Some suppose the comparison with "natural brute beasts" indicates that these men were under the dominion of unbridled lusts and passions, "walking after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness," ver. 10, like those who perished in Sodom and Gomorrah; and that, like these, they were treasuring up wrath against a day of wrath. Rom. ii. 5.

13. *And shall receive the reward, &c.* "And receive that vengeance that is due to them; those I mean that in the daytime take pleasure in those villanies which are wont to need the night to cover the shame of them, that are

become the reproaches of Christianity, committing all villany in their sacred assemblies and festivities, and making use of their false doctrines to turn your Christian feasts into unclean, lascivious meetings." — *Hammond*. ¶ *Spots they are and blemishes*. Like dark spots on a fair surface, they disfigure the escutcheon of Christianity, and bring reproach on the cause to which they profess to be devoted. ¶ *Sporting themselves with their own deceivings, &c.* "Under the garb of the Christian profession they give indulgence to the most corrupt passions. They took advantage of their false views to turn even the sacred feasts of charity, or perhaps the Lord's supper itself, into an occasion of sensual indulgence. Compare 1 Cor. xi. 20-22. The difference between these persons and those in the church at Corinth seems to have been that these did it of design, and for the purpose of leading others into sin; those who were in the church at Corinth erred through ignorance." — *Barnes*.

14. *Having eyes full of adultery, &c.* Inveterately addicted to licentiousness. This vice seems to have been the peculiar characteristic of the persons, or of the "false teachers," ver. 1, denounced by the apostle; references to it are of frequent occurrence through this whole chapter. ¶ *Beguiling unstable souls*. "The persons, especially the women, who were thus allured, were souls not established in the faith and practice of the gospel." — *Macknight*. ¶ *Covetous practices*. See note on ver. 3. ¶ *Cursed children*. Deserving and devoted to

15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet.

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried

with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much wantonness*, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

19 While they promise them

condign punishment. See ver. 1-3. The three verses, 12-14, have been well paraphrased thus: "As if they were totally deprived even of human reason, they draw ruin upon themselves by blasphemously intruding into things they understand not, by the abominable impurity of their lives, and by their endeavors to lead others into the same wickedness which they practise themselves." — *Gilpin*. This description is considered applicable to the Gnostics and the Nicolaitans, Rev. ii. 6, 15, who were among the earliest "false teachers" in the Christian church.

15, 16. *Following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor*. The history of Balaam's unsuccessful efforts to curse the children of Israel, at the request of Balak, is recorded in Numbers, ch. xxii.-xxiv. "In the book of Numbers, Balaam is called the son of *Beor*. Perhaps the name *Beor* was corrupted into Bosor; or, as Rosenmüller suggests, the father of Balaam may have had two names. Schleusner (*Lex.*) supposes that it was changed by the Greeks, because it was more easily pronounced. The LXX., however, read it *βεωρ*. The meaning here is, that they imitated Balaam. The particular point to which Peter refers, in which they imitated him, seems to have been the love of gain, or covetousness. Possibly, however, he might have designed to refer to a more general resemblance, for, *in fact*, they imitated him in the following things: (1.) in being professed religious teachers, or the servants of God; (2.) in their covetousness; (3.) in inducing others to sin, referring to the same kind of sins in both cases. Ba-

laam counselled the Moabites to entice the children of Israel to illicit connection with their women, thus introducing licentiousness into the camp of the Hebrews, Numb. xxxi. 16; compare Numb. xxv. 1-9; and, in like manner, these teachers led others into licentiousness, thus corrupting the church." — *Barnes*.

17. *These are wells without water, &c.* See notes on Jude 12, 13.

18. *For when they speak great swelling words of vanity*. "The false teachers, pretending to an illumination superior to that of the apostles, vaunted thereof on all occasions in pompous language, to gain credit to everything they taught." — *MacKnight*. ¶ *They allure, &c.* This word, in the Greek, is like that which is translated *beguiling* in ver. 14, of which verse, indeed, this is very nearly a repetition. The idea is, that the "false teachers" were not only licentious themselves, but endeavored to make others partakers of their wickedness. ¶ *Those that were clean escaped, &c.* The marginal note is, "Or for a little, or, a while, as some read." This reading better corresponds with the description of the same persons, in ver. 14, as "unstable souls." They had been converted, indeed, from their former unbelief and ungodliness, and had "escaped from them who live in error." But their conversion was so recent, that they had not yet become firmly established in the way of truth, and were easily turned aside. They had need of *growth* in grace and in knowledge, ch. iii. 17, 18.

19. *While they promise them liberty*.

liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For it had been better for them not to have known the

way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

### CHAPTER III.

**T**HIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in

“Under pretence of liberty, they draw them to licentiousness and looseness of life. 1 Pet. ii. 16; Jude 4. They teach them that they may lawfully use fleshly delights, and so deceive them by things to which they are prone naturally.” — *Assemb. Annot.* ¶ *Are servants of corruption*, &c. Are slaves to sin, under the dominion of their sinful habits. Their boasted liberty to do wrong has brought them under bondage to the wrong, so that it has become very difficult for them to resist its power. Having yielded themselves to obey sin, they have become the servants of sin. See note on Rom. vi. 16.

20, 21. *For if after they have escaped*, &c. The idea is sufficiently expressed in this paraphrase: “And this is so far from being extenuated by the privilege of their being Christians, that it is become the greater and more dangerous guilt by this means; for certainly they that have been converted from all their heathen sins by accepting the faith of Christ, and then again relapse and return to them, this latter estate of theirs, this Christian heathenism, is worse than their bare heathenism at first. For it had been more for the advantage of such never to have been taught the doctrine of Christ and Christian practice, than, when they have undertaken to obey it, to fall back again into their heathen, vicious courses.” — *Hammond*. See notes on

Heb. x. 26–29. A recreant apostate deserves more severe punishment than he does who has never been converted.

22. *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb*, &c. The proverb concerning the dog is substantially quoted from Prov. xxvi. 11; the other is not found in the Old Testament, but is said to be common in the Rabbinical writings. The literal import of both is manifest. The dog will eat a second time what his stomach has once rejected; and swine will wallow again in the mire, though ever so thoroughly washed. “As applied by the apostle, this proverb signifies that, although the persons spoken of had at their baptism promised to renounce their wicked practices, and perhaps had begun to do so, yet as the corruptions of their nature still remained, they returned to their evil practices with more greediness than ever. Blackwell says this proverb, with great propriety and strength, marks out the sottishness and odious manners of wretches enslaved to sensual appetites and carnal lusts; and the extreme difficulty of reforming vicious and inveterate habits.” — *Macknight*.

### CHAPTER III.

1. *This second epistle*. Indicating that a former epistle had been sent to the same persons. ¶ *In both which*

*both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance :

2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour :

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last

days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word

*I stir up your pure minds*, &c. "That is, the main object of both epistles is the same, to call to your remembrance important truths, which you have before heard, but which you are in danger of forgetting, or from which you are in danger of being turned away by prevailing errors." — *Barnes*. The particular subject on which the writer would fix the attention of his brethren was the approaching day of the Lord, ver. 4, 10, 12, which had been predicted by the holy prophets, and by our Lord and his apostles, ver. 2.

2. *That ye may be mindful of the words*, &c. "Of that which you cannot but have heard, being prophesied of in the Old Testament very frequently, Joel ii., and by Christ, Matt. xxiv., and by us apostles of Christ, namely, that within a short time there should come a notable destruction upon the unbelieving or impenitent Jews, and all the polluted Christians among them, and a remarkable deliverance of all the persevering Christians; the one an act of Christ as Lord, the other as Saviour or deliverer." — *Hammond*.

3. *There shall come in the last days scoffers*. Our Lord predicted that false teachers, or scoffers, should attempt to deceive the people in regard to his "coming," Matt. xxiv. 24; and his apostles uttered similar predictions, 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1; Jude 18. "The times immediately preceding this ruin are called the 'last days' and the 'last times,' that is, the last times of the Jewish city, nation, economy. This manner of speaking frequently occurs; which let our St. John himself interpret, 1 Joh. ii. 18: 'There are many anti-

christ, whereby we know it is the last time;' and that this nation is upon the very verge of destruction, when as it hath already arrived at the utmost pitch of infidelity, apostasy, and wickedness." — *Lightfoot*. ¶ *Walking after their own lusts*. See note on ch. ii. 10.

4. *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?* That is, where is that coming which was predicted, or promised? or, where is the fulfilment of the promise? ¶ *Since the fathers fell asleep*. Either, since the ancient prophets died, who foretold this "day of God," or "coming of the Lord," or, since our elders died, who heard Christ utter the same predictions. ¶ *All things continue as they were*, &c. The "scoffers" endeavored to shake the faith of the disciples, by insisting that the uniform course of events did not indicate the near approach of such a general convulsion as was expected to mark the "coming of the Lord." The apostles discerned the signs of the times, and warned their brethren to "be diligent, that they might be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless," ver. 14; but the scoffers and unbelievers were wilfully ignorant, ver. 5, and perished in the overwhelming destruction which soon befell the Jews.

5, 6. *For this they are willingly ignorant of*, &c. "These atheistical scoffers, that suppose or affirm that there hath been no considerable change since the creation, do not consider what a change there was once in Noah's time, the whole world destroyed with a flood for the sins of impure, impenitent sinners, such as those who now object thus; for the heavens

of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

being created at the beginning, and the earth so framed that there was abundance of waters within the globe thereof, and itself placed in the midst of waters, in the clouds round about, God being pleased in the creation so to dispose of it, in order to the punishing of wicked men, at length the windows of the heavens, that is, the clouds, were opened, and the fountains of the great deep broken up, Gen. vii. 11, and by this means the whole earth was covered and drowned by waters." — *Hammond*. It should be observed that "the world," which, "being overflowed with water, perished," or was destroyed, was not the visible heaven and earth, or the material universe; for these remain until the present day. Men were destroyed, together with their social, political, and religious institutions. These had become corrupt, and they were abolished. A similar judgment was approaching, when the like institutions should be swept away as by fire, instead of water, ver. 7-13; yet as the material universe was not destroyed by water, so neither need we to apprehend its destruction by fire.

7-13. *But the heavens and the earth which are now, &c.* "The destruction of Judea is here, ver. 10 and 12, described by dissolution or consumption by fire; and so Isa. ix. 5; lxvi. 15, 16; Mal. iv. 1; and Joel ii. 3, 30, where that destruction is described; so 2 Thess. i. 8, *in flaming fire taking vengeance*; so Heb. x. 27, *a burning of fire to consume* all that obdurately stand out against Christ; and that be-

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

longing to this latter also, as will appear by comparing ver. 25 and ver. 37. What is here thus expressed by St. Peter is ordinarily conceived to belong to the end of the world and the beginning of the *millennium*, or *thousand years*, and so, as St. Peter here saith, ver. 16, many other places in St. Paul's epistles, and in the gospel, especially Matt. xxiv., are mistaken and wrested. That it doth not belong to either of these, but to this fatal day of the Jews, sufficiently appears by the purport of the whole epistle, which is to arm them with constancy and perseverance, till that day come, and particularly in this chapter to confute them who object against the truth of Christ's prediction and resolve it should not come at all, against whom he here opposes the certainty, the speediness, and the terribleness of its coming. That which hath given occasion to those other common mistakes is especially the hideousness of those judgments which fell upon that people of the Jews, beyond all that ever before are related to have fallen on them, or indeed on any other people, which made it necessary for the prophets which were to describe it, and who use tropes and figures, and not plain expressions, to set down their predictions, to express it by these high phrases of the *passing away*, and *dissolving of heaven*, and earth, and elements, &c., which, sounding very tragically, are mistaken for the great, final dissolution of the world." — *Hammond*. "It certainly cannot be denied, that the manner of speaking, used by the holy

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens

prophets and apostles, countenances the opinion of those who call the Messiah's kingdom the beginning of the new world or age. Thus, according to the prophet Haggai, ii. 6, God says, when he shall send him who is the desire of all nations, will he 'shake the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the dry land.' Likewise, according to Isa. lxxv. 17, God says, 'Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.' Again he says, lxxvi. 22, 'The new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me.' This agrees with Rev. xxi. 1, where we read, — 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away; and there was no more sea.' Nor does St. Peter differ from this, when he says in his second epistle, iii. 13, 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth.' All these passages mean that a new scene of affairs was to be introduced into the world by the Messiah, so that it might be considered the beginning of a new world or age. It is certain that all these prophecies describe to us the kingdom of the Messiah; but there are various grades and periods in their progress to completion. The time when God began to *shake the heavens and earth* was when he abolished the profane idolatry of the Gentiles, producing a universal commotion in the world by the preaching of the gospel, and rousing mankind to a new hope; when he overthrew Jerusalem and the temple, where had been the throne of his glory; when he shook the land of beauty by his anathema, and dissolved the weak and beggarly elements of

the former world; when he introduced that state in which neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and all nations without distinction enjoy the privileges of the spiritual kingdom; in one word, when old things are passed away, and all things become new. 2 Cor. v. 17. — *Witsius*. "The destruction of Jerusalem and the whole Jewish state is described as if the whole frame of this world were to be dissolved. Nor is it strange when God destroyed his habitation and city, places once so dear to him, with so direful and sad an overthrow; his own people, whom he accounted of as much or more than the whole world beside, by so dreadful and amazing plagues. Matt. xxiv. 29, 30. 'The sun shall be darkened, &c. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man,' &c.; which yet are said to fall out within that generation. Ver. 34. 'The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.' 2 Pet. iii. 10. Compare with this Deut. xxxii. 22; Heb. xii. 26; and observe, that by elements are understood the Mosaic elements, Gal. iv. 9; Coloss. ii. 20; and you will not doubt that St. Peter speaks only of the conflagration of Jerusalem, the destruction of the nation, and the abolishing the dispensation of Moses. — With the same reference it is, that the times and state of things immediately following the destruction of Jerusalem are called a 'new creation,' 'new heavens,' and a 'new earth.' 'Behold, I create a new heaven and a new earth.' Isa. lxxv. 17. When should that be? Read the whole chapter, and you will find the Jews rejected and cut off; and from that time is that new creation of the



being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, accord-

ing to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

evangelical world among the Gentiles. Compare 2 Cor. v. 17, and Rev. xxi. 1, 2, where the old Jerusalem being cut off and destroyed, a new one succeeds, and new heavens and a new earth are created. 'We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth.' 2 Pet. iii. 13. The heavens and the earth of the Jewish church and commonwealth must be all on fire, and the Mosaic elements burnt up; but we, according to the promise made to us by Isaiah the prophet, when all these are consumed, look for the new creation of the evangelical state." — *Lightfoot*. "Most interpreters think that the events here mentioned are to be accomplished at the time of the general resurrection; that then the earth itself and the stars are to be purified by fire, and the whole universe changed for the better; but I prefer the opinion of those who interpret the passage as referring not to a material, but a figurative fire, not to the end of all things, but to the Jewish war, and the civil war of the Romans, which occurred at the same period, by which almost the whole world was in a state of conflagration. (1.) The doctrine of the conflagration of the world seems rather to be a fable invented by the Stoics; nor does it appear worthy the wisdom of God to reveal to us those things which in no degree concern us. This conflagration has not affected those who lived on the earth when these things were written; and after death they were translated into a quiet and secure place, where they were not troubled by any concern for their forsaken dwellings or fields, or the commotions which might exist. (2.) On the other hand, there are very frequent predictions, elsewhere, concerning the Jewish war, and the Roman civil war, such as almost the whole of the Apocalypse, Matt. xxiv., 2 Thes. ii., to which this passage seems to refer, ver. 2. Those things, in prophetic

style, are described in the same manner, by the stealthy coming, the dissolution of the heavens and earth, the coming of the Lord, and the day of the Lord. See *Maimonides More Nevuch*. ii. 29. Nor is this calamity improperly compared to the deluge, for it shook the whole earth, and destroyed a multitude of men, as they were destroyed who were drowned in the days of Noah. (3.) The world here does not signify the dwelling-place of men, but men themselves, who were to be punished, ch. ii. 5, and the trial by fire is the trial of men. 1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 12. By the 'last days,' ver. 3, may sometimes be understood the time present, or near at hand; as Heb. i. 2; 1 John ii. 18; Acts ii. 17. Nor is this view of the passage opposed by the fact that in ver. 9, it is said that God chooses that man shall repent before that day and the coming of the Lord, while, nevertheless, the greatest number of men were converted to Christ after the wars were entirely ended. These facts are not contradictory; for the repentance of many did preserve them from ruin, and the subsequent ruin of others led many more to repentance." — *Wetstein*. So much for the meaning of the whole passage. I add an explanation of a few phrases. ¶ *One day is with the Lord as a thousand years*. "In this matter it must be considered who it is that makes the promise, ver. 2, an infinite God; and then, though forty years (for example) is a very great time among us men, whose lives are so short, yet with God, who is infinite, a thousand years is no considerable space, but a very short and small duration, Ps. xc. 4; and therefore though the prophecy be not yet fulfilled, about three or four and thirty years after Christ's departure from us, yet it may and will most certainly, and that within a few years now." — *Hammond*. ¶ *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, &c.*

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15 And account *that* the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

He doth not delay its fulfilment, as men sometimes do, without cause; but he suffers his friends to endure trials and persecution, by postponing the execution of judgment upon his enemies, for a benevolent purpose, which is stated in what follows. ¶ *Not willing that any should perish*, &c. Our Lord assured the Jews that he would gladly witness their escape from the impending calamity through repentance, and assured them that their destruction was delayed, that they might have opportunity to repent. See notes on Matt. xxiii. 36-39; Luke xiii. 1-9. ¶ *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*. Unexpectedly; when men are not prepared for it. Our Lord used similar language in respect to the same event, Matt. xxiv. 42-44. See note on 1 Thess. v. 1-3. ¶ *Hasting unto the coming*, &c. "Margin, as in Greek, 'hastening the coming.' The Greek word rendered *hasting*, *σπεύδω*, means to urge on, to hasten; and then to hasten after anything, to await with eager desire. This is evidently the sense here. — *Wetstein* and *Robinson*. The state of mind which is indicated by the word is that when we are anxiously desirous that anything should occur, and when we would hasten or accelerate it if we could." — *Barnes*. The faithful disciples might well be desirous that the long-expected event should occur, as they confidently expected then to obtain "rest" from the persecutions which they had long endured. See note on 2 Thess. i. 7.

14. *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things*, &c. See notes on Matt. xxiv. 45-51; 1 Cor. i. 8.

16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being

15. *And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation*. A repetition of the idea embraced in ver. 9; namely, that by delay in the execution of judgment, men might escape destruction by repentance. ¶ *Even as our beloved brother Paul*, &c. This, at the least, is an acknowledgment of Paul as a fellow-apostle, equal to himself in authority as an inspired servant of God; else why appeal to what Paul had written as a corroboration of his own testimony?

16. *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things*, &c. "And indeed in most if not all his epistles, hath he said somewhat of this matter, concerning this famous day of vengeance on the obdurate Jews, and deliverance of the faithful, and deferring that day of destruction on the former, on purpose (ver. 15) to gather in as many of the latter as he could. So Rom. ix. 29, 33; x. 8-10; xi. 5; xiii. 11, 12; 1 Cor. i. 7, 8; iii. 13; 1 Thess. ii. 16; v. 1, 2, 3, 9; 2 Thess. i. 6-10; ii. 1, 2, 3, 8; 1 Tim. iv. 1; vi. 14. In which matter some things there are concealed by God purposely from the knowledge of men and angels, as the punctual time of the coming of it, &c.; from whence some unskilful, unsettled Christians have taken occasion to fall off from the faith of Christ, and to ruin themselves by so doing. This they do by deductions from some places of Scripture, wrested by them, as it is ordinary with them to wrest and distort the writings of the prophets, &c.; but it is through their ignorance and ungroundedness on the Christian faith that they do so." — *Hammond*.

led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

18 But grow in grace, and in

17. *Seeing ye know these things before, beware, &c.* See notes on ch. i. 10-21.

18. *But grow in grace.* In order the more surely to avoid apostasy, or falling from steadfastness in the faith through the error of wicked advisers and false teachers, ver. 17, strive to acquire and cultivate every Christian grace. ¶ *And in the knowledge of our Lord, &c.* "And in the knowledge of the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." — *Macknight*. Knowledge of the truth is often described as conducive to growth in grace, salvation from sin, or enjoyment of eternal life. John v. 24; xvii. 3, 17; 1 Tim. ii. 4; Heb. viii. 10-12. In this place there seems to be a

the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

special intimation, that an accurate knowledge of our Lord's predictions of the approaching manifestation of divine power and glory would be the surest safeguard against apostasy and its ruinous consequences. To secure the safety of his brethren against such defection from the truth and destruction with the unbelievers and hypocrites, was a principal object of Peter in both his epistles. ¶ *To him be the glory, both now and forever.* The Lord Jesus Christ is surely entitled to honor and glory from all who realize what he has done and suffered on their behalf, and what blessings they have received through his ministry.

# THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

## CHAPTER I.

**T**HAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen

with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

2 (For the life was mani-

## CHAPTER I.

1. This Book might more properly be styled an essay or a treatise, Acts i. 1, than an epistle. It does not purport to be addressed to any person or persons in particular, but is rather a general discussion of the subjects embraced in it. It commences without the customary salutation found in the epistles of the other apostles, and in the other two ascribed to John, and ends without the apostolic benediction. It seems to have acquired the designation of *epistle* by being placed, by those who arranged the canon of the New Testament, among the didactic writings of the apostles, which were in fact epistles. But whether properly called epistle, or treatise, or by any other name, its authenticity as a genuine work of the beloved disciple John has been almost universally acknowledged in the Christian church. Different opinions have been entertained concerning its date; some suppose it was written as late as A. D. 98; others assign earlier dates. "The most probable of these various opinions is that which assigns an early date to this epistle, namely, before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the subversion of the Jewish polity. For, in the first place, the expression in ch. ii. 18, 'it is the last hour,' is more applicable to the last hour or times of the duration of the Jewish state than to any later period, especially as the apostle adds, 'And as ye have heard that antichrist is

coming, even so now there have been many antichrists; whence we know that it is the last hour;' in which passage the apostle evidently alludes to our Lord's prediction concerning the springing up of false Christs, false teachers, and false prophets, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Matt. xxiv. 5-25." — *Horne*. ¶ *That which was from the beginning*. "That is, from the beginning of the Christian dispensation. The terms,  $\alpha\pi' \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$ , or  $\epsilon\grave{\xi} \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$ , *from the beginning*, commonly occur in St. John's writings in reference to the beginning of a period determined only by the connection in which the words occur. Thus, in the second chapter of this epistle, ver. 7, he says, 'Beloved, I write you no new commandment, but an old commandment, which ye have heard *from the beginning*' (rather, *from the first*). See also ch. ii. 24; iii. 11; John vi. 64; xv. 27; xvi. 4, &c." — *Norton*. ¶ *Which we have heard, &c.* By declaring that he had heard and seen and handled what he was about to declare to his brethren, the apostle desired them to understand that he had personal knowledge and the testimony of his senses concerning that which he affirmed. ¶ *Of the Word of life*. Some understand this phrase to indicate the *gospel*, in which life and immortality are revealed. Others suppose that, by a common figure of speech, "the Word of life" indicates our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the gospel was proclaimed. This interpretation, which is the

fested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the

Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

more general and probably the more correct, has been thus expressed: "Having principally in view to oppose the opinions of the Gnostics, who held that Christ was only man in appearance, the apostle begins with declaring in the most express manner possible, from the evidence of his senses, seeing, hearing, and even handling, that this opinion was false. By *life* and *eternal life* it is evident that John means *the person of Jesus*, who taught that doctrine, because he speaks of seeing and handling this life. The term *life* was one of the favorite phrases of the Gnostics, and probably applied by them to Christ." — *Priestley*.

2. *For the life was manifested, &c.* "Before, it lay hid in itself; now, it was manifested by incarnation, John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16; and by miracles which none else did, John iii. 2; vii. 31, 46; xi. 47; xii. 37; xv. 24." — *Assemb. Annot.* "The life which is eternal was manifested to the apostles at our Lord's baptism and transfiguration, when, by a voice from heaven, God declared him his beloved Son. It was manifested likewise by God's raising Jesus from the dead. That this verse is a parenthesis, is evident from the repetition of the words of the first verse in the beginning of the third." — *Macknight*. See also note on ver. 1.

3. *That ye may have fellowship with us.* "The object of the apostle's writing was to withdraw his fellow-Christians from all fellowship with the Gnostics, who then held separate assemblies, and to unite them more closely to those who were called the catholic church; assuring them that

God the Father and Jesus Christ were with them, and not with the Gnostics." — *Priestley*. Our Lord taught that his true disciples should enjoy intimate communion and fellowship with him and with his Father. John xvii. 11, 21-23.

4. *That your joy may be full.* "This is almost the same language which the Saviour used when addressing his disciples as he was about to leave them, John xv. 11; and there can be little doubt that John had that declaration in remembrance when he uttered this remark. The sense here is, that full and clear views of the Lord Jesus, and the fellowship with him and with each other which would follow from that, would be a source of happiness. Their joy would be complete, if they had that, for their real happiness was to be found in their Saviour. The best editions of the Greek Testament now, instead of the common reading *our joy*, read *your joy*." — *Barnes*.

5. *This then is the message, &c.* The message or truth, which we received from the Lord Jesus, and which we declare unto you, is this. ¶ *That God is light.* In the Scriptures *light* is often used to denote purity, truth, and happiness, as well as knowledge. See Prov. iv. 18, 19; John i. 5; iii. 19; Eph. v. 8. The idea here is, not that God is infinite in knowledge, but that he is absolutely pure, and holy, and good. ¶ *And in him is no darkness at all.* This form of speech is often used by John. To make his affirmation more strong, he denies the opposite. Perfect light necessarily excludes darkness. But this apostle, having affirmed

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another,

that God is pure and unadulterated light, that is, that he is absolutely holy, to make assurance doubly sure, adds, that "in him is no darkness" or evil "at all." Similar forms of expression occur, ver. 6, 8; ch. iv. 6-8.

6. *If we say, &c.* If we profess to be in communion with God, or in fellowship with the pure fountain of light or holiness, and yet live in the indulgence of sin, which is indicated by "walking in darkness," our practice gives the direct lie to our profession. ¶ *We lie, and do not the truth.* We speak falsely, not truly. The idea is repeated in a slightly different form. See note on ver. 5.

7. *But if we walk in the light, &c.* If we cleave unto holiness with all the heart; if we earnestly strive to be pure and holy, in thought, word, and deed. ¶ *We have fellowship one with another.* We are united in love, and hope, and enjoyment. We have a community of interest and desire. ¶ *And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* The grace of God, of which the blood of his Son was the seal and pledge, will effectually remove sin, and crown with success all honest efforts to attain purity and holiness. See notes on Matt. xxvi. 28; Heb. ix. 14.

8. *If we say that we have no sin, &c.* "This the apostle declared in opposition to the Nicolaitans and Simonians, who, corruptly fancying that under the gospel dispensation no action whatever was forbidden, argued that they did not sin by anything they were pleased to do. As the cleansing of all men from sin, mentioned in the preceding verse, doth not mean that believers are pardoned and rendered perfectly holy in the present life, but only that the pardon of all their sins is attainable, and that the sanctifica-

tion of their nature is begun and only gradually carrying on, the apostle, without contradicting himself, might affirm that whosoever saith he hath no sin deceiveth himself. For, through the infirmity of human nature, and the strength of temptation, the holiest sometimes fall into sin; but they quickly recover themselves by repentance, so that they do not continue in sin. This text, with ch. iii. 3, overthrows the Pelagian notion, that good men may live without sin, and that many good men have actually so lived." — *Macknight*. The ancient Pelagians were not the only persons infected with this error. Many in our own day profess the ability to live for years in perfect freedom from sin. They deceive themselves. All men in this life constantly need the forgiving grace of God, ver. 9, and should be joyfully grateful for its exercise. ¶ *The truth is not in us.* The same idea in a different form. See note on ver. 5.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he

tion of their nature is begun and only gradually carrying on, the apostle, without contradicting himself, might affirm that whosoever saith he hath no sin deceiveth himself. For, through the infirmity of human nature, and the strength of temptation, the holiest sometimes fall into sin; but they quickly recover themselves by repentance, so that they do not continue in sin. This text, with ch. iii. 3, overthrows the Pelagian notion, that good men may live without sin, and that many good men have actually so lived." — *Macknight*. The ancient Pelagians were not the only persons infected with this error. Many in our own day profess the ability to live for years in perfect freedom from sin. They deceive themselves. All men in this life constantly need the forgiving grace of God, ver. 9, and should be joyfully grateful for its exercise. ¶ *The truth is not in us.* The same idea in a different form. See note on ver. 5.

9. *If we confess our sins.* That is, to him against whom we have sinned. No man is in a fit condition to receive forgiveness, until he becomes fully sensible of his sinfulness, and is willing to acknowledge it. See notes on Luke xv. 18-21. ¶ *He is faithful and just.* Faithful to his promise, Ezek. xviii. 21, 22; Matt. vi. 7, 8; and just, inasmuch as he regards every man according to his true character, and will not treat the penitent supplicant for mercy as an impenitent and hardened transgressor. ¶ *To forgive us our sins.* See notes on Matt. vi. 12-15. ¶ *And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* He will not only forgive the past, but will purify the heart from sinfulness. When this purification shall become complete, we shall sin and suffer no more forever. See note on ver. 7.

10. *If we say that we have not sinned.*

is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

## CHAPTER II.

**M**Y little children, these things write I unto you,

See ver. 8. If we deny that we have heretofore sinned, and incurred the need of forgiveness. ¶ *We make him a liar.* We represent him as a liar, impeach his veracity, deny the truth of his word. By his inspired servants, he has declared all men to be sinners, in need of forgiveness. Rom. i., ii., iii. Of course, speaking absolutely, "it is impossible for God to lie," Heb. vi. 18; but if we deny his testimony, we virtually accuse him of falsehood. ¶ *And his word is not in us.* His truth is not accepted and firmly believed by us. This is a substantial repetition of the preceding words. See note on ver. 5.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *My little children.* This form of address indicates the affectionate regard of the apostle, rather than the age of those whom he addresses. ¶ *That ye sin not.* "Having told them, ch. i. 10, that no man is without sin, it is plain that, by their not sinning, the apostle meant, either their not sinning habitually, or their not sinning wilfully. He wrote the things contained in the preceding chapter to prevent them from sinning, because the consideration that God is faithful to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from them, suggested ch. i. 9, must have a powerful influence on every good man, to make him solicitous to avoid sin, as far as human infirmity will permit."—*Macknight.* ¶ *And if any man sin.* All are liable to sin; and, in spite of their utmost efforts to avoid it, all men actually do commit sin. See ch. i. 8, 10. ¶ *We have an advocate with the Father, &c.* We are not cast off and

that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

utterly forsaken, because we are sinners. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, and labored, and died, because the sinful children of men were sinful, and needed forgiveness. See Matt ix. 13; Rom. v. 8–10. Having entered heaven, he is still our friend and advocate. See note on Heb. ix. 24. "God only can forgive sin; and though we have no claim on him, yet there is one with him who can plead our cause, and on whom we can rely to manage our interests there. The language is evidently figurative, since there can be no literal pleading for us in heaven; but it is expressive of the great truth that he has undertaken our cause with God, and that he performs for us all that we expect of an advocate and counsellor."—*Barnes.* The word *παράκλητος*, *paraclete*, *advocate*, is used by no other sacred writer; it occurs four times in John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26; xvi. 7; and is uniformly rendered *comforter*; and it indicates the same divine spirit of love to mankind which is here expressed. See note on Heb. vii. 25.

2. *And he is the propitiation for our sins.* See note on Rom. iii. 25. ¶ *And not for ours only.* Not only for the sins of those who had already attained "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," ch. i. 3, through faith in the gospel. ¶ *But also for the sins of the whole world.* God is not partial in the distribution of his blessings. All men are sinners, all stand in equal need of salvation. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 Tim. i. 15. What he does for one, he will do for

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He that saith he abideth in

him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

all, for all are in equal need, and God is impartial. Whatever is implied in *propitiation* is here declared to be for the equal interest and benefit of "the whole world," in accordance with the assurance elsewhere that Jesus Christ "gave himself a ransom for all," and "tasted death for every man." 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9. "The apostle does not say that he died for any select *part* of the inhabitants of the earth, or for *some out of* every nation, tribe, or kindred; but for all mankind; and the attempt to limit this is a violent outrage against God and his word." — Clarke. "When he saith, 'he is the propitiation for our sins,' he doth not mean, that he was so sufficiently, but not intentionally; for what comfort would that afford them, that his death was sufficient to procure the pardon of their sins, had God designed it for that end, unless they also knew that he intended it for their propitiation? When, therefore, he proceeds to say, 'and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world,' he must mean also that he was the propitiation for their sins, not only sufficiently, but also in his gracious intention." — Whitby.

3. *And hereby we do know that we know him, &c.* That is, that we are truly his friends and disciples. See note on John xvii. 3. Obedience to his commandments is the best evidence to convince ourselves or others that we do thus love him. John xiv. 15, 23; xv. 14.

4. *Is a liar, &c.* Makes a false profession to others, and perhaps deceives himself. Habitual violation of law is utterly inconsistent with respect and love to the lawgiver.

5. *In him verily is the love of God perfected.* His love to God is proved to

be genuine by his obedience to the divine commands given through his Son. Perfection is of course to be here understood in a qualified sense; for no man renders perfect obedience while in the flesh, or exercises perfect love. Ch. i. 8; Rom. iii. 10, 19, 20. ¶ *That we are in him.* That we are united to him in spirit; that we enjoy fellowship or communion with him; that we are truly his disciples. John xvii. 21-23.

6. *Abideth in him.* Equivalent to knowing him, or being his disciples, in ver. 3. ¶ *Ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.* Ought to imitate his example in all things. If we are truly his disciples, if we are influenced by his Spirit, if we acknowledge and approve him as our leader, we should walk in his steps with the utmost circumspection. Eph. v. 8.

7, 8. *I write no new commandment, &c.* "It is not any new matter which I now discover or write unto you, but that which you were taught at the first preaching of the faith unto you; and that which was taught you so early may deserve to be styled an old commandment. It is that, indeed, that Christ called a new commandment; and so it is in comparison with the Mosaical law, to which Christ hath added some degrees of perfection; but that is no prejudice to it; it is not the less true for being so, nor the less considerable to you, but ought in all reason (as proclaimed by God from heaven, and Christ sent on purpose to preach it) to be looked on as a thing wherein we are at this time concerned more particularly, those dark, imperfect shadows of the Mosaical economy being now at an end, and the more perfect Christian precepts, which are to take place



8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

11 But he that hateth his

brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is from the beginning*. I write unto you, young men,

and to turn out the Mosaical performances, being already, as the sun, risen and shining in our horizon, in full force obligatory to all Christians." — *Hammond*. Doubtless, the reference is to the language of our Lord, recorded in John xiii. 34, in which he styles his injunction of mutual love "a new commandment." In the following verses, the apostle speaks particularly of that love, as an evidence of true discipleship.

9-11. *He that saith he is in the light, &c.* Light and darkness are sometimes put figuratively for knowledge and ignorance, sometimes for holiness and sinfulness. See notes on John i. 5-9. "The apostle hath declared, ch. i. 5, that 'God is light;' and ch. i. 7, that 'if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with him;' and ver. 8, of this chapter, that 'the light which is true now shineth,' namely, by the preaching of the gospel. From these things he justly inferred in this verse that 'he who saith he is in the light,' that is, in the fellowship of God, and well instructed in the doctrines of the gospel, 'and yet hateth his brother, is in the darkness till now;' he is still in ignorance and wickedness, and is no member of the fellowship of God, notwithstanding his loud pretensions to illumination." — *Macknight*. ¶ *He that loveth his brother, &c.* Whoso obeys the royal law of love is enlightened by the true light, and has fellowship with the source of light. ¶ *He that hateth his brother, &c.* A substantial repetition of ver. 9, after

the manner of John, who is accustomed to repeat the same idea in different forms, both affirmatively and negatively, to prevent any possible misapprehension.

12. *I write to you, little children.* The apostle divides those whom he addresses into three classes, the young, the middle-aged, and the old. By *little children* he does not here mean infants, but such as had attained years of discretion, — old enough to understand his warnings and encouragements, and old enough to have sinned and to have received forgiveness. ¶ *Because your sins are forgiven you.* See note on Matt. vi. 12-15. The fact that a sinner has once been forgiven furnishes a strong motive to love him who forgives, and to avoid a repetition of the fault. Luke vii. 36-50.

13. *I write to you, fathers.* The older class of disciples is here addressed. ¶ *Because ye have known him that is from the beginning.* From the beginning of the Christian dispensation. See note on ch. i. 1. "The argument is, that they had been long acquainted with the principles of his religion, and understood well its doctrines and duties. It cannot be certainly inferred from this that they had had a *personal* acquaintance with the Lord Jesus; yet that this might have been is not impossible, for John had known him, and there may have been some among those to whom he wrote who had also seen and known him. But perhaps all that is neces-

because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

sarily implied in this passage is, that they had had long opportunity of becoming acquainted with the religion of the Son of God, and that having understood that thoroughly, it was proper to address them as aged and established Christians, and to call on them to maintain the true doctrines of the gospel against the specious but dangerous errors which then prevailed."—*Barnes*. ¶ *I write unto you, young men*. Those in the full strength of life. ¶ *Because ye have overcome the wicked one*. The adversary; some prominent enemy of the gospel. The word *πονηρόν*, *wicked one*, is the same which is used in 1 Cor. v. 13, and rendered *wicked person*. Probably the reference is to some active opposer, who had unsuccessfully tempted them to apostatize. ¶ *Because ye have known the Father*. An additional reason is assigned for addressing the young. In early life, they had been made acquainted with the Father of their spirits, who had forgiven their sins; it was meet that they should be mindful of his great goodness and obedient to his law.

14. *Fathers*. This is a repetition of part of ver. 13. ¶ *Young men*. Partly also a repetition of ver. 13; but two additional facts are stated as reasons for addressing them, namely, "Because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you." Perhaps, however, these facts should be regarded as explanatory of the great fact mentioned in ver. 12. Their strength of resolution, and steady adherence to the word of God, had

15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof:

enabled them to triumph over the adversary, and to remain faithful among all the temptations to apostasy. "They had not flinched from an open defence of the truths of religion when assailed; they had not been seduced by the plausible arts of the advocates of error, but they had had strength to overcome the wicked one. The reason here for appealing to this class is, that in fact they *had* showed that they could be relied on, and it was proper to depend on them to advocate the great principles of Christianity."—*Barnes*.

15-17. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world*. The word *world* here does not denote the universe which God has made, and which deserves our admiration and regard; nor does it denote the people in the world, "the world of mankind," for these we are commanded to love, even as God loves and blesses them. The sense in which the word is here used is indicated by the specifications, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." The sense of the passage is well paraphrased thus: "Be not attached to the world or the things of it, for if you be, you cannot at the same time love God, and make his will the rule of your conduct. If you make the things which the world tempts with, the chief object of your pursuit, things that please the eye and the other senses, you class yourselves with the friends of the world, and not with the friends of God. For these are opposite to one another; as our

but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if

they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the

Saviour said, we cannot love God and mammon." — *Priestley*. "The meaning is, that we are not to fix our affections on worldly objects, on what the world can furnish, as our portion, with the spirit with which they do who live only for this world, regardless of the life to come. We are not to make this world the object of our chief affection; we are not to be influenced by the maxims and feelings which prevail among those who do." — *Barnes*. The language of our Saviour is similar in Matt. vi. 24-30, and that of the apostle in Col. iii. 1-17.

18. *It is the last time*, &c. This is mentioned as a reason why Christians should hold fast their faith, and be especially on their guard against apostasy. Great convulsions were at hand; and our Lord had foretold that false teachers would then, if possible, deceive the very elect. "It is the last hour, namely, of the duration of the Jewish church and state; God will soon destroy the Jewish commonwealth, so that the power of your persecutors will speedily be broken." — *Macknight*. "The times immediately preceding this ruin are called the 'last days' and the 'last times;' that is, the last times of the Jewish city, nation, economy. This manner of speaking frequently occurs; which let our St. John himself interpret, 1 John ii. 18: 'There are many antichrists, whereby we know it is the last time;' and that this nation is upon the very verge of destruction, when as it hath already arrived at the utmost pitch of infidelity, apostasy, and wickedness." — *Lightfoot*. ¶ *As ye have heard that antichrist shall come.*

See Matt. xxiv. 24. The apostle is supposed to refer particularly to the Gnostics, whose heresy was understood by the apostles to involve a denial "that Jesus is the Christ." Ver. 22. The word antichrist occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in ver. 22; ch. iv. 3; 2 John 7. It indicates any opposer of Christ and his gospel. "The heresies which sprung up in the days of St. John were the antichrist of that time.—The name has been generally applied to whatever person, or thing, systematically opposes Christ and his religion." — *Clarke*.

19. *They went out from us*, &c. The heretics whom the apostle styles antichrist had formerly been members of the Christian church, and had seceded. This is said to have been true at that day only of the Gnostics. ¶ *But they were not of us*. They were not firm and undoubting believers in the doctrines of the gospel. The mere fact that they separated from us is sufficient to prove that they were not partakers of the "like precious faith," 2 Pet. i. 1; for if they were in full communion with us, why separate?

20. *But ye have an unction from the Holy One*. Or, an *anointing*, as the same word is twice translated in ver. 27. It seems to indicate the same influence of the Divine Spirit which was promised by our Lord to his disciples. John xvi. 7-15. ¶ *And ye know all things*. Not literally all things, for God alone is omniscient; but all things which God had revealed by his Son. See note on John xvi. 13.

21. *I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth*, &c. "You are not to regard my writing to you in

truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: *[but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*

24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

this earnest manner as any evidence that I do not suppose you to be acquainted with religion and its duties. —The very fact that they did understand the subject of religion, he says, was rather the reason why he wrote to them.” —*Barnes*. ¶ *And that no lie is of the truth.* There is no fellowship between truth and falsehood. See notes on 2 Cor. vi. 14–16. A particular application of this general truth is made in the next two verses.

22, 23. *Who is a liar, &c.* “There is no such liar, such dangerous false teacher, as he that denies Jesus to be the Messiah, and thus do the ring-leaders of the Gnostic heresy. Whosoever doth so is an antichrist, denying in effect both the Father and the Son; the Son directly, the Father by consequence, because he hath testified of Christ by miracles and voice from heaven, which testimony of the Father is not true, if Jesus be not the Christ. And so whosoever denieth the Son to be the Messiah renounceth the Father also, who hath testified him to be so. And this do the followers of Simon, the Gnostics, who deny Christ to have been born, or lived, or died, truly, but only in appearance.” —*Hammond*. ¶ *But he that acknowledgeth the Son, &c.* The last clause of this verse is rejected by many critics as spurious.

25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life.

26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have

Its rejection or retention, however, does not materially affect the sense of the passage; for it is simply an affirmation, after the manner of John, of what is substantially implied in the first clause.

24. *Let that therefore abide in you, &c.* Hold fast the truth which ye heard from the first, that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Matt. xvi. 16; Acts viii. 37. This was what the adversary, styled antichrist, denied, and endeavored to induce the faithful to renounce. ¶ *Ye also shall continue in the Son, &c.* Shall be united in the bonds of faith and love to the Son, and also to the Father. See John xvii. 11, 20–23.

25. *And this is the promise, &c.* Such knowledge of God and of his Son as is implied in ver. 24, is called *eternal life*, because its natural effect is to cleanse the heart from sinfulness. See note on John xvii. 2, 3.

26. *Concerning them that seduce you.* “The word seduce means to lead astray; and it here refers to those who would seduce them from the truth, or lead them into dangerous error.” —*Barnes*. The reference seems to be to the Gnostics. See note on ver. 18.

27. *But the anointing, &c.* See note on ver. 20. ¶ *Ye shall abide in him.* See note on ver. 24.

28. *When he shall appear, &c.* It is

confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

## CHAPTER III.

**B**EHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath be-

now "the last time," ver. 18; false prophets and antichrists have already come, and we may expect that Christ will soon appear, according to his word. Matt. xxiv. 3-35. Be prepared to meet him with confidence. "I beseech you, my tender children, keep fast to Christ, unmoved, that when that great fatal day of visitation comes, that coming of Christ so long expected (see Matt. xxiv.), wherein the obdurate unbelievers shall be destroyed, and the believers delivered and preserved, we may come with cheerfulness and confidence, and not be turned with shame from him, or as inconstant (and so guilty) persons be ashamed to meet him." — *Hammond*.

29. *If ye know that he is righteous, &c.* "That God is a holy God; ye know also that every one who doeth righteousness, who lives a holy life, following the commandments of God, is born of him; begotten of him; is made a partaker of the divine nature, without which he could neither have a holy heart nor live a holy life. This verse properly belongs to the following chapter, and should not be separated from it. The subject is the same, and does not stand in any strict relation to that with which the twenty-eighth verse concludes." — *Clarke*.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *Behold what manner of love, &c.* How great, how conspicuous is the divine love! "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and

stowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Ch. iv. 10. See note on ch. ii. 2. ¶ *That we should be called the sons of God.* That we should be the sons of God; that God should have adopted us as sons, and made us to stand in a spiritually filial relation to him by the influence of his Spirit. See notes on Rom. viii. 14-17. ¶ *Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.* "The heathens being wholly ignorant of the true God, and the Jews not knowing him according to his will, John viii. 55; xv. 21; xvi. 3, and as he had discovered himself to them by his Son, 1 John ii. 23. And this may comfort you against the persecutions of the world, that it is their want of that saving knowledge of the true God, which ministers so great advantage to you, which causes them to disaffect you." — *Whitby*. Others suppose that by *him* the apostle means the Lord Jesus, although the immediate antecedent is God. "Did not know the Lord Jesus Christ. That is, the world had no right views of the real character of the Lord Jesus when he was on the earth. They mistook him for an enthusiast or an impostor; and it is no wonder that, having wholly mistaken his character, they should mistake ours." — *Barnes*. Either interpretation gives a good sense; but the former seems the more natural and more in accordance with the language of the apostle.

2. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* We know that we are now the sons of God, by the influence of his Spirit on our hearts; we know not, however, to what higher privileges we shall be advanced. ¶ *But we know*

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

4 Whosoever committeth sin

that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, &c. There is the same variety of interpretation here as in ver. 1: some supposing Christ to be indicated by the word *him*, and others more naturally understanding the word to refer to God as its proper antecedent. Of those who suppose Christ to be intended, some think the apostle refers to his *appearance* at the destruction of Jerusalem as in ch. ii. 28, and others that his *appearance* in the resurrection-state of mankind is intended. Both understand that a contemplation of his image will have a transforming influence on the human character, to render us more like him. See notes on Rom. viii. 29; 2-Cor. iii. 18. The more literal import of the apostle's language is expressed thus: "This we know, that when that blessed time shall come, we that are sons of God shall (as the notion of sons signifies in the Scripture) be like unto that Father of ours, like him in holiness, and like him in bliss, and that bliss shall consist in seeing him as he is, a fountain of all that is desirable to our natures."—*Hammond*. "The general sense is as follows: as to our present state, now, I repeat, we are already sons of God by adoption; and as to our future one, though it doth not yet appear even to Christians, much less to the world, what we shall be; however, this we do know, that when he shall appear (or when our state shall be disclosed), we shall be *like* unto him, for we shall see him as he is. That is to say, as Lücke expresses it, in spite of the world's disowning, we still really are God's children (how great is that dignity!) and as yet it is not even made manifest what we are to be (in what glory we are to have a share hereafter). But this much we do know with certainty, that when this is manifested (when the glory of the children of God is manifested), we shall then be like unto him, of whom

transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know that he was

we are born; for we shall see him as he is; that is, we shall know him indeed, and be in his presence. See Rom. viii. 16, seq.; Col. iii. 3, 4."—*Bloomfield*. Our Lord exhibited the Father's character for the imitation of his children. See notes on Matt. v. 43-48. We may well suppose that the more clearly we perceive that character, the closer will be the imitation; and that we shall be truly *like him* when we distinctly "see him as he is."

3. *And every man that hath this hope in him, &c.* See notes on Rom. viii. 24, 25. ¶ *Purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* That is, will strive to imitate the divine character. We may become pure and perfect, as God is pure and perfect, *in kind* though not *in degree*. See notes on Matt. v. 43-48. That is, we may assimilate our characters to the divine character, and approach it more and more nearly, by the cultivation of the Christian spirit and graces, and the practice of the Christian virtues, though we may not expect to attain absolute perfection here, or to become wholly free from human infirmity.

4. *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth the law.* The Apostle Paul declares that "where no law is, there is no transgression," and consequently no sin, because, as it follows in this place, "sin is the transgression of the law." Any act, whether hurtful, indifferent, or even apparently beneficial, in itself, is sinful if it be a violation of the divine law, and not otherwise. See note on Rom. iv. 15. "The Nicolaitans and other heretics in the first age, fancying that knowledge sanctified the worst actions, affirmed that no man possessed of knowledge will be punished for any action whatever. In opposition to this pernicious doctrine the apostle declares that, as the offence of sin lies in its being a transgression of the law of God, the Moral Governor of the

manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7 Little children, let no man

deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of

world will certainly punish every wilful sinner." — *Bloomfield*. A similar "pernicious doctrine" still prevails to some extent; namely, that no man who is truly converted is punishable for any action whatever, because what would be sinful in the unconverted is not sinful in him. On the contrary, such a transgressor is more guilty, and deserves "sorer punishment." Luke xii. 47, 48; Heb. x. 29.

5. *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins.* It is the uniform testimony of the gospel, that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, or was manifested in the flesh, to "save his people from their sins," Matt. i. 21; to "take away the sin of the world," John i. 29; "to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities," Acts iii. 26; "to redeem us from iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 14. He saves no man in his sins, nor makes him happy in the transgression of the law. But he reveals God as the object of love, and inspires love and obedience in the human heart. He saves men from their sins, and makes them happy through the spirit of holiness.

6. *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.* He doth not sin wilfully or habitually; but the language of the text must be understood with some limitation, because the writer elsewhere declares positively, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," ch. i. 8; and another apostle declares as positively, concerning "both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin," and that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 9, 23. But although the "sons of God" may not attain absolute moral perfection while

they dwell in the flesh, yet they may and must, if they would have the assurance of their own consciences that they have "seen" and "known" the true character of their Father, yield a cheerful and habitual obedience to his law. Wilful or habitual transgression is utterly inconsistent with the character of those who have been adopted as the sons of God. Rom. viii. 15-17. ¶ *Whosoever sinneth, &c.* The idea asserted in the first clause of the verse is repeated in the negative or inverse form.

7. *He that doeth righteousness is righteous.* "The man who does righteousness, or leads an upright life, is a righteous man, and no other one is. No matter how any one may claim that he is justified by faith; no matter how he may conform to the external duties and rites of religion; no matter how zealous he may be for orthodoxy, or for the order of the church; no matter what visions and raptures he may have, or of what peace and joy in his soul he may boast; no matter how little he may fear death, or hope for heaven, — unless he is, in fact, a righteous man in the proper sense of the term, he cannot be a child of God." Comp. Matt. vii. 16-23. If he is, in the proper sense of the word, a man who keeps the law of God, and leads a holy life, he is righteous, for that is religion. Such a man, however, will always feel that his claim to be regarded as a righteous man is not to be traced to what he is in himself, but to what he owes to the grace of God." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Even as he is righteous.* See note on ver. 3.

8. *He that committeth sin is of the devil, &c.* Is under the dominion of evil sinful principles. See note on John viii. 44, where the author of the text uses similar language, but even more vividly figurative. ¶ *That he*

God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the chil-

*might destroy the works of the devil.* "The Son of God was manifested" for the express purpose of delivering mankind from the dominion of sin, and bestowing on them "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. vii. 21. See note on ver. 5. I only add, if any insist that the devil here denotes a great fallen spirit, second in power and authority to God alone, as many have supposed, when the devil himself shall be destroyed, Heb. ii. 14, and his works also shall be destroyed, as here asserted, we may hope that God will reign without a rival, and his spirit of holiness pervade the universe.

9. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.* See note on ver. 6. ¶ *For his seed remaineth in him.* "By this expression we may understand, with Augustine, of the ancients, and of the moderns, Grotius, Benson, Rosenmüller, and most recent commentators, the revealed word of God; see 1 Pet. i. 23. But I would rather suppose it to denote, as Carpzov and others explain, the vital principle of the spiritual seed committed to our hearts, like a seedling to the ground; and consisting not in the word of God only, but in the divine grace by which that word is made effectual; in short, the sanctification of the Spirit spoken of at Gal. v. 22. Nearly the same view is taken by Dr. Paile, who explains it, 'the seminal principle of an imperishable life,' 2 Tim. i. 10; Eph. iv. 18; that is to say, it is not only in him, but *abiding* in him, as the means whereby (as he is now a compound of 'flesh and spirit') he shall ever more and more consecrate himself to God's service; Rom. vi. 22; vii. 25; viii. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11; vii. 1; 1 Thess. v. 23;

dren of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his

2 Pet. i. 4; and so he cannot sin, because he is born of God." — *Bloomfield.* A similar explanation of this obscure passage is given by Barnes.

10. *In this the children of God are manifest.* See note on ver. 1. Our Lord said: "Ye shall know them by their fruits." See Matt. vii. 15-20. And so here the beloved apostle says that the practice of righteousness and the cultivation of brotherly love is the characteristic mark by which the children of God may be distinguished from those who are yet slaves to sin. ¶ *The children of the devil.* See note on ver. 8. ¶ *Whosoever doeth not righteousness, &c.* See notes on ver. 6, 7. "Because the profane world neither knows nor appreciates the difference between those who are the children of God, and those who are not, the apostle here subjoins an emphatic repetition of the sentiment that 'every one who does not practise righteousness is not of God;' and that with the assurance that this is the only test of men being in a state of salvation. On this *general* position is then engrafted a *particular* one, respecting that most important branch of our duty to men, which consists in love and kindness to our brethren; meaning not only brother-Christians, but brother-men. See 2 Pet. i. 7; Gal. v. 14; Col. iii. 14." — *Bloomfield.* "God is love," ch. iv. 8; and love to God and love to men are declared to be the substance of the divine law for our government. Matt. xxii. 35-40.

11. *For this is the message, &c.* Or, the *commandment*, as in the margin. Jesus displayed the tenderest love to men, and he requires them to love each other. Ver. 16; John xv. 9-14.

12. *Not as Cain, &c.* See Gen. iv.



brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life,

because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the

3-8. Cain is cited as exhibiting a remarkable deficiency of that love which the disciples of Christ are required to cherish. ¶ *Who was of that wicked one.* The same word is translated "wicked person," 1 Cor. v. 13, and applied to a notorious transgressor; it is also translated "evil" in Matt. v. 45, and applied to sinners generally. It is used here as in Matt. xiii. 38, and like "the devil," in ver. 8, 10, as a personification of evil principles. ¶ *And wherefore slew he him?* The reason assigned is hatred, springing from envy. God manifested his approval of Abel's offering, and did not manifest a like approval of the sacrifices offered by Cain; thus indicating a preference for the character and conduct of Abel. "And Cain was very wroth," and "rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Gen. iv. 5, 8.

13. *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.* Our Lord forewarned his disciples that the world would hate them, and assigned the reason; namely, because they would be distinguished from the world by the superior excellence and purity of their character. It is natural that the evil should be envious of the good, and should hate them. So much the more important is it, therefore, that the children of God should love each other, and on this ground, among others, it is urged by our Lord. See notes on John xv. 17-19.

14. *We know that we have passed from death unto life.* That we have been quickened from death "in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1. Vivified by the Divine Spirit. See note on John v. 24. "From spiritual death to spiritual life; that is, that we are true Christians." — *Barnes*. The figure of life and death, denoting the

condition of believers and unbelievers, regenerate and unregenerate, those who "are led by the Spirit of God," Rom. viii. 14, and those who are "the servants of sin," Rom. vi. 20, "the children of God," and "the children of the devil," ver. 10, is very often used by this apostle, both in this epistle and in his Gospel. ¶ *Because we love the brethren.* This was made the characteristic test of discipleship. See notes on ch. ii. 7-11. ¶ *Abideth in death.* Hath not yet "passed from death unto life." See note on John iii. 36.

15. *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.* Hatred is a murderous spirit; that is, if allowed to increase in intensity, it will induce murder, as in Cain, the first murderer. This phrase is a repetition, in somewhat stronger language, of the idea embraced in the last clause of ver. 14. ¶ *No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* No one who hateth his brother, and thus cherishes a spirit akin to that which prompts to the destruction of life, has yet attained a Christian spirit, or "passed from death unto life." Such a one still "abideth in death," and will so long as he "hateth his brother."

16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God.* The words of *God* have nothing corresponding with them in the original, but were inserted by the translators, as is indicated by the *italic* type. It is very generally conceded that their insertion was unfortunate as well as unnecessary, because, as the sentence is now constructed, the most natural import of it is that *God* "laid down his life for us." Doubtless, the death of our Lord Jesus Christ was a manifestation of the "love of God." Ch. iv. 9, 10; John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8.

love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of *compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in

tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God.

22 And whatsoever we ask,

But it was not the design of the apostle to announce that particular truth in this place. It was rather to direct the attention of his brethren to the most conspicuous example of *the spirit of love* which had ever been manifested. "The full sense is, 'herein have we learned, and we do know *love*, that is, the principle of love, what love is, in that He (the Son of God) hath laid down his life for us.' 'The principle of love is considered as exemplified in Christ. At the next clause there is a tacit inference, deduced from the acknowledged and bounden duty of Christians to follow the example of their Lord. Thus we may render, 'Thus also as he did, ought we, following his example, to do likewise,' and also in obedience to his injunction at John xiii. 15. — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Because he laid down his life for us*. There can be no doubt that the reference here is to our Lord Jesus Christ. ¶ *We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren*. We ought to imitate our Master, by loving each other so fervently as to submit willingly to the most severe sacrifice, if required at our hands by the providence of God. This is implied in a genuine recognition of him as a pattern of purity and righteousness. It is also required by him as a test of discipleship. See notes on John xv. 12-14.

17. *But whoso hath this world's good, &c.* What evidence exists that a man loves God or his fellow-men, if he refuse assistance which they need, and which he has power to bestow? The same idea is expressed in James ii. 15, 16. If we ought to lay down

our lives for others, ver. 16, how much more ought we to make any reasonable sacrifice of worldly goods to relieve the poor and the needy! If we obey the divine injunctions, and love others as we love ourselves, we shall not refuse to contribute to their necessities according to our ability. To be sure, our first duty is to our household, 1 Tim. v. 8; but we should be cautious that our special duty do not wholly engross our attention, and render us unmindful of our more general duty.

18. *Let us not love in word, &c.* Professions avail little, without corresponding deeds. Let us do the acts of kindness which are prompted by love, whether we speak of that love or not. See notes on Matt. vi. 2-4.

19. *And hereby we know, &c.* That is, if we truly love the brethren and willingly make sacrifice of our ease or substance for their benefit, we need not be disturbed by any anxious doubts whether we are truly disciples of the Lord.

20. *For if our heart condemn us, &c.* "If we know that we entertain any criminal intention, it cannot be concealed from God, who knows us even better than we know ourselves." — *Priestley*.

21. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, &c.* If our conscience bears witness that we earnestly and habitually strive to obey the command which requires faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and love to one another, ver. 23, we may cherish a firm confidence that God approves our honest efforts, and the degree of success we have attained,

we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby

we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

#### CHAPTER IV.

**B**ELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit

and that he will be merciful to our weakness, and forgive our imperfections.

22. *And whatsoever we ask, &c.* See notes on Matt. vii. 7, 8. ¶ *Because we keep his commandments, &c.* "Not that this is the meritorious ground of our being heard, but that it furnishes evidence that we are his children, and he hears his children as such."—*Barnes*. See note on Rom. xi. 35. None can claim blessings as a reward justly due for services rendered to the Lord. But those who are led by the Spirit to keep the commandments, and while they are under the influence of the Spirit, will ask aright for what God is willing to bestow.

23. *And this is his commandment.* Our Lord declared that the substance of the law and the prophets was comprehended in love to God and love to man. Matt. xxii. 35-40. So the apostle sums up the duty of Christians in faith and love. Neither is sufficient alone; but both are necessary to the Christian character. ¶ *That we should believe, &c.* See note on John v. 24. ¶ *And love one another.* See notes on John xiii. 34, 35.

24. *And he that keepeth his commandments, &c.* "The full sense is, 'he then who keepeth (habitually) God's precepts is the person who abideth in him, and he in him,' implying love, favor, and blessing from God. In the next sentence is given a test of the having this 'abiding of God' in them; namely, by his imparting to them the Holy Spirit and its gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary, since, in either case, is implied the approbation

and favor of God; and from the presence or absence of which we may infer our spiritual state."—*Bloomfield*. ¶ *Dwelleth in him.* See note on John xiv. 23. ¶ *By the Spirit which he hath given us.* See note on Rom. viii. 16.

#### CHAPTER IV.

1. *Beloved, believe not every spirit.* "By *spirits* are evidently meant *teachers*, because it is immediately added, 'because many false prophets are gone out into the world; and by *prophets* were meant not always those who foretold future events, but only those who, in imitation of the ancient prophets, exhorted the people.'—*Priestley*. ¶ *But try the spirits, &c.* Compare what they teach with what God has revealed. Compare the spirit which their conduct indicates with the Spirit of God manifested in his Son. In addition to these general tests, the apostle specifies one particular mark of truth, in ver. 2, as applicable to the special heresy which disturbed the church and sorely exercised his mind. ¶ *Because many false prophets, &c.* See note on ch. ii. 18.

2. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God.* That is, by the test which immediately follows, you may determine whether the teachers who address you are true or false, whether they speak under the influence of the Spirit of God or otherwise. ¶ *Every spirit that confesseth, &c.* "Every person, claiming to have the Spirit, who openly and fearlessly professes that Jesus Christ was made very man (for our redemp-

of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

4 Ye are of God, little chil-

dren, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not

tion), is from God; that is, his pretensions are valid. See 1 Cor. xii. 3. Considering the known opinions of the heretics of that age, which consisted not in a denial of the *divinity*, but of the *humanity*, of Christ, the best expositors are agreed that there is reference to the tenets of the Docetæ and others, who held Jesus Christ to have been a mere *phantasm*, destitute of a real body. Now, the apostle maintains that he came *really* (clothed) in the flesh, that is, in a human body." — *Bloomfield*. Some suppose the reference is to those false teachers who denied the Messiahship of Jesus, perhaps to the "false Christs" predicted Matt. xxiv. 24, or to those timid Christians who, through fear of persecution, renounced their faith in Jesus as the Christ. The former interpretation, however, seems more natural; yet it should be observed, that whatever particular form of the heresy is here described the heresy itself was understood by the writer to involve a denial that "Jesus is the Christ," as is manifest from his language in ch. ii. 22.

3. *And every spirit that confesseth not*, &c. This is the converse of the proposition in ver. 2, according to the manner of John. See note on ch. i. 5. ¶ *And this is that spirit of antichrist*, &c. See note on ch. ii. 18.

4. *Ye are of God*. Born of God; guided and influenced by his Spirit. ¶ *And have overcome them*. "Have triumphed over their arts and temptations, their endeavors to draw you into error and sin. The word *them* in this place seems to refer to the false prophets or teachers who collec-

tively constituted antichrist. The meaning is, that they had frustrated or thwarted all their attempts to turn them away from the truth." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Because greater is he that is in you*, &c. God dwelt by his Spirit in the hearts of the faithful disciples, and enabled them to triumph over their adversaries. God "is greater than all," and none can pluck his children out of his hand. John x. 29. ¶ *Than he that is in the world*. The spirit of evil, personified as "the devil" in ch. iii. 8, 10. In the great contest between light and darkness, good and evil, grace and sin, grace will unquestionably triumph, and, "the last enemy" having been destroyed, "God shall be all in all." Rom. v. 20, 21; 1 Cor. xv. 28. So in the minor contests on earth. God will support the most humble Christian under the temptations and persecutions of the wicked, and crown him with joy and peace. Rom. viii. 35-39.

5. *They are of the world*. They were influenced by a mere worldly spirit; they were not yet brought under the purifying influence of the Divine Spirit. A similar contrast between natural and spiritual powers is found in John iii. 31. ¶ *Therefore speak they of the world*, &c. They speak what is agreeable and acceptable to the world.

6. *We are of God*. Under the influence of his Spirit. The apostle says this of himself and the faithful disciples of Christ. ¶ *He that knoweth God*, &c. "Our doctrine is the pure doctrine of Christ, hath nothing of worldly greatness or secular interests in it, but only of piety and purity,

us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the

love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

self-denial, contempt of the world; and every pious person hearkeneth to us; and this is a way of discerning true from false prophets; one is all for purity and confession of Christ even in persecutions, the other for worldly advantages and self preservation." — *Hammond*.

7. *Beloved, let us love one another.* Love to God and man is the distinguishing characteristic of the divine law. None of the apostles enforced this duty more earnestly than John, and he enforces no other duty more earnestly than this. See notes on John xiii. 34, 35. ¶ *For love is of God.* It is a godlike principle. He who is under its influence resembles God; "for God is love." Ver. 8. ¶ *Every one that loveth is born of God, &c.* Is a son of God characteristically, being animated by his spirit of love. See note on Rom. viii. 14.

8. *He that loveth not, &c.* The negative counterpart of the assertion in ver. 7. See note on ch. i. 5. ¶ *For God is love.* "This is a sublime sentiment, the meaning of which is, that love or benevolence is so essential an attribute of the divine nature, that it may be said to constitute its very essence, every other moral attribute being only a modification of it. In reality, justice, as well as mercy, is nothing else than goodness, the object of it being the good of the society in which it is exercised." — *Priestley*. "God is love, that is, entirely love, love itself. Comp. ver. 16. Here the apostle puts the attribute of love as God's essence (in a similar manner as in the Gospel, iv. 24, it is said 'God is a Spirit,') because God, in the redemption through Christ, is more specially

and most perfectly recognized and felt to be love essentially. (Lücke.) Well it is said of God that 'he is love;' for God can as well cease to be as cease to love. If he should deny that, he would deny himself; and that he will not do because he cannot, and he cannot do it, because he will not. It is impossible for him to whom 'all things are possible' to deny himself." (Bp. Sanderson.) — *Bloomfield*. None, says the apostle, can claim filial relationship to this fountain of love, unless his own heart be warmed by the same spirit.

9. *In this was manifested the love of God, &c.* See notes on John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8.

10. *Not that we loved God.* The glorious exhibition of love, to which the apostle directs attention, was not made by men, but towards men. Nay, it is not true even that God loves us because we love him. On the contrary, "we love him because he first loved us." Ver. 19. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8. When will men cease to misrepresent God, by insisting that he loves those who love him, and hates those who hate him? "Do not even the publicans the same?" See notes on Matt. v. 43-48. ¶ *To be the propitiation for our sins.* See note on ch. ii. 2.

11. *Beloved, if God so loved us, &c.* We should endeavor to cultivate and manifest the spirit which is declared to be the very essence of the divine character. Thus only can we become "perfect even as our Father, who is in heaven, is perfect," and feel a satisfactory assurance that we are truly the children of God. The Fatherhood of God

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us,

implies the brotherhood of man; and the love of the Father manifested toward all his children furnishes the strongest possible reason why they should love each other.

12. *No man hath seen God at any time.* See note on John i. 18. We cannot see God with mortal eyes; yet we have assurance that he is "not far from every one of us," Acts xvii. 27, and the apostle tells us, in what follows, how we may become fully conscious of the divine presence. ¶ *If we love one another God dwelleth in us, &c.* The exercise of love makes us like God, and brings us into communion with him. See note on John xiv. 23.

13. *Because he hath given us of his Spirit.* "He has imparted the influence of that Spirit to our souls, producing 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,' &c. Gal. v. 22, 23. It was one of the promises which the Lord Jesus made to his disciples, that he would send the Holy Spirit to be with them after he should be withdrawn from them; John xiv. 16, 17, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7; and one of the clearest evidences which we can have that we are the children of God, is derived from the influences of that Spirit on our hearts." — *Barnes*. All this is very true; and yet I think the apostle in the text does not refer so much to the general influences of the Divine Spirit, as to the single manifestation of love which excites love to each other in the hearts of true disciples. The idea embraced in ver. 12, 13, expressed in its most simple form, seems to be this: if we love one another, God dwelleth in us; and we know that he dwells in us and we in him, because we feel the influence of his Spirit in our hearts, causing us thus to love each other.

14. *And we have seen and do testify.*

because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

We have been convinced beyond doubt, we are absolutely certain, and proclaim the fact without hesitation and without qualification. ¶ *That the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* "The reason why this is referred to here is not quite apparent, but the train of thought in this passage would seem to be this: the writer is discoursing of the love of God, and of its manifestation in the gift of the Saviour, and of the proper influence which it should have on us. Struck with the greatness and importance of the subject, his mind adverts to the *evidence* on which what he was saying rested, the evidence that the Father had *really* thus manifested his love. That evidence he repeats, that he had actually *seen* him who had been sent, and had the clearest demonstration that what he deemed so important had really occurred." — *Barnes*. Two characteristics of this apostolic testimony deserve special notice (1.) Its directness or absoluteness. It is not declared that the Father sent the Son to make salvation possible to the world, to offer salvation to the world, to invite, and persuade, and entreat the world to be saved; but "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world;" to accomplish the work of salvation. In short, he was sent to *do* a special work, not merely to make an *attempt* which might or might not succeed. (2.) Its unlimited extent. It is not testified that the Father sent the Son to save a few or many of the human race, to gather some out of every nation and family in the world; but the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world;" that is, of the whole world, of all men, of every man. This accords with the testimony of our Lord himself, and of his other apostles. John iii. 16, 17; Acts iii. 25, 26; 1 Tim. ii. 3-6; Tit. ii. 11, 12; Heb. ii. 9.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have

boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love him because he first loved us.

20 If a man say, I love God,

15. *Whosoever shall confess, &c.* See note on ver. 2. ¶ *Dwelleth in God, and God in him.* See note on John xiv. 23.

16. *And we have known and believed, &c.* We have received the most convincing evidence, and we most undoubtingly believe, that God loves us. Indeed, his very nature is love, and it embraces all his children. See note on ver. 14. ¶ *And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, &c.* See ver. 15, and notes on ver. 7, 8.

17. *Herein is our love made perfect, &c.* "The meaning is, 'the love that is within us, or in us, is made perfect.' The expression is unusual, but the general idea is, that *love* is rendered complete or entire, in the manner in which the apostle specifies." — *Barnes*. ¶ *That we may have boldness in the day of judgment.* In any time of trial, in any time of discrimination between the good and evil, that they may be "rewarded according to their works;" even when "judgment begins at the house of God," and adequately recompenses "them that obey not the gospel of God," 1 Pet. iv. 17; those who are conscious that they truly love God and all his children, and are therefore conscious of their filial relationship to him, "may have boldness," that is, may confidently trust in God that whatever may befall them at present, "all things shall work together for good to them." Rom. viii. 28. By "the day of judgment," the apostle probably referred to some special trial of their constancy then near at hand; perhaps to that "coming of the Lord," foretold in Matt. xxiv. and referred to in ch. ii. 18, 28; or, perhaps,

to the peril to which they were exposed through persecution: "In this the perfection of that love which is to be found in a Christian consists, that in a time of danger, when we are brought before judges, and may probably lose our lives for confessing of Christ, then we retain courage and cheerfulness, and confess him willingly; that we behave ourselves in this world as Christ did when he was here, that is, lay down our lives in testimony of the truth." — *Hammond*. ¶ *Because as he is, &c.* Because we are under the influence of that love which is so freely exercised by him towards us; because, in this sense, and to this extent, we are perfect even as he is perfect. See note on Matt. v. 48.

18. *There is no fear in love, &c.* Love implies such confidence in the person beloved, as to exclude all fear of being injured by him. If "we love God because he first loved us," ver. 19, how can we fear injury at his hands? Rather may we cherish that perfect confidence in him, for protection, and for all needed blessings, which Paul expresses in such glowing language. Rom. viii. 28-39. ¶ *Fear hath torment.* "It is a painful and distressing emotion. Thus men suffer from the fear of poverty, of losses, of bereavement, of sickness, of death, and of future woe. From all these distressing apprehensions, that love of God which furnishes an evidence of true piety delivers us." — *Barnes*. ¶ *He that feareth is not made perfect in love.* So long as we fear any injury at the hands of God, it is manifest that we have not perfect confidence in his infinite goodness; and so long as we lack

and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

## CHAPTER V.

**W**HOSOEVER believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat lov-

eth him also that is begotten of him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.

such confidence, it is manifest that we cannot love him with the whole heart, or exercise "perfect love."

19. *We love him because he first loved us.* Our love to God does not purchase his love to us; but he kindles a flame of love in our hearts, by exhibiting his love toward us. See note on ver. 10.

20. *If a man say, &c.* The theme of this chapter is the duty of mutual love. This duty is enforced by the assurance that God loves all, and that all ought also to love him. But no man has a right to believe that he truly loves God whom he hath not seen, so long as he loves not his fellow-man whom he hath seen, whom God has made in his own image, and who is a partaker of the same divine love which encircles us.

21. *And this commandment, &c.* This is what is styled a "new commandment," in ch. ii. 8. See notes on Matt. xxii. 36-40; John xiii. 34, 35; xv. 12.

## CHAPTER V.

1. *Whosoever believeth, &c.* See note on ch. iv. 3. ¶ *And every one that loveth him that begat, &c.* That is, every one that loveth God loveth God's children also. The idea is similar to that which is expressed in ch. iv. 20, 21.

2. *By this we know, &c.* Substantially a repetition of the idea in ver. 1.

All who love God are bound to love each other, ch. iv. 20, 21, and every one who truly loves God will love the children of God, ver. 1. When we do love God, therefore, with all the heart, we may safely believe that we love "the children of God" according to his commandment.

3. *For this is the love of God, &c.* This is the most satisfactory evidence that we love God, namely, "that we keep his commandments." Our Saviour demanded obedience as the proper evidence of love to him, and the same rule applies here. See note on John xiv. 15. ¶ *And his commandments are not grievous.* The commandment of which the apostle here speaks particularly requires mutual love among mankind. This surely is not a grievous commandment. No man was ever made less happy by obeying it. On the contrary, the obedient have secured present peace and happiness. The same is true in regard to all the divine commandments. God requires nothing inconsistent with our highest happiness. See notes on Matt. xi. 29, 30.

4. *For whatsoever is born of God, &c.* "For whosoever is born of God, overcometh the world; his affections are taken off from it, and set upon his God; and so it cannot be grievous to him to part with it, or suffer the loss of any worldly good, to secure the divine favor. And this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our



5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he that came by water and blood, *even Jesus*

faith, to wit, that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, Heb. xi. 1, which gives us the assurance of a better and a more enduring substance, and so makes us take joyfully the spoiling of our goods, Heb. x. 34, and patiently endure those light afflictions which are but for a season, as knowing they work for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. iv. 17."—*Whitby*.

5. *Who is he that overcometh the world, &c.* This is the converse of ver. 4. It is asserted there that he who is born of God overcomes the world by faith; and here, interrogatively in form, that no one can overcome the world if he be destitute of faith. The special article of faith here presented is "that Jesus is the Son of God." A profession of such faith was satisfactory to our Lord, when made by Peter, Matt. xvi. 16, 17, and to Philip, when made by the Ethiopian nobleman, Acts viii. 37, 38. In this epistle, the writer insists that whosoever is destitute of such faith doth not overcome the world, nor truly know God, but "denieth the Father and the Son." See notes on ch. ii. 22, 23.

6. *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, &c.* Various interpretations of this language have been given by different commentators. The following appears quite as reasonable as any other: "The coming of Jesus the Christ, here spoken of, is his coming into public life, attested or proved to be the Christ and Son of God. Jesus came thus attested, first, by means of his baptism in water; secondly, by means of his blood or death, followed by his resurrection. The proof by water is mentioned before the proof by blood, because his baptism was prior to his death. Jesus being put to death for calling himself

Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the

Christ the Son of God, his resurrection from the dead was an infallible proof of his being the Son of God. For if he had falsely claimed that high title, God never would have raised him from the dead. On all these accounts, therefore, our apostle had good reason to affirm that Jesus came attested as the Son of God by blood as well as by water. The Spirit bare witness to Jesus by means of the water; for after Jesus came up out of the water in which he was baptized, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost was seen descending in a bodily shape, and lighting upon him, whilst he prayed. By this miracle the Spirit pointed him out to all present as the person of whom the voice from heaven spake. Accordingly, John Baptist told the Jews that Jesus was pointed out to him as the Christ by that witness of the spirit: John i. 32, 'and John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him; 33, and I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.' It is the Spirit likewise who witnessed that Jesus is the Son of God by means of his blood. For it was the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead, and thereby gave him that great attestation of his being the Son of God. So St. Peter affirmeth, 1 Pet. iii. 18. Hence he is said by St. Paul, 1 Tim. iii. 16, to have been justified by the Spirit."—*Macknight*.

7, 8. *For there are three that bear record, &c.* In former times, there has been sharp controversy concerning the genuineness of a portion of these two verses. At present, there is a very general agreement, by Trinitarian writers as well as others, that

Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spir-

it, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is

the portion which I here include in brackets is spurious; namely, "For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth] the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." One of the most judicious among modern Trinitarian writers says, "The reasons which seem to me to prove that the passage included in brackets is spurious, and should not be regarded as a part of the inspired writings, are briefly the following: (1.) It is wanting in all the earlier Greek manuscripts, for it is found in *no* Greek MS. written before the sixteenth century. It is incredible that a genuine passage of the New Testament should be wanting in *all* the early Greek manuscripts. (2.) It is wanting in the earliest versions, and indeed in a large part of the versions of the New Testament which have been made in all former times. It is wanting in both the Syriac versions, one of which was made probably in the first century, in the Coptic, Armenian, Slavonic, Ethiopic, and Arabic. (3.) It is never quoted by the Greek fathers in their controversies on the doctrine of the Trinity; a passage which would be so much in point, and which could not have failed to be quoted if it were genuine. (4.) The argument against the passage from the external proof is confirmed by internal evidence, which makes it morally certain that it cannot be genuine. (a) The connection does not demand it. It does not contribute to advance what the apostle is saying, but breaks the thread of his argument entirely. He is speaking of certain things which bear 'witness' to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah; certain things which were well known to those to whom he was writing, the spirit, and the water, and the blood.

How does it contribute to strengthen the force of this, to say that *in heaven* there are 'three that bear witness,' three not before referred to, and having no connection with the matter under consideration? (b) The *language* is not such as John would use. He does indeed, elsewhere use the term *Logos*, or *Word* (ὁ λόγος) John i. 1, 14; 1 John i. 1; but it is never in this form, 'The Father and the Word;' that is, the terms *Father* and *Word* are never used by him, or by any of the other sacred writers, as correlative. (c) Without this passage, the sense of the argument is clear and appropriate. There are three, says John, which bear witness that Jesus is the Messiah. These are referred to in ver. 6, and in immediate connection with this, in the argument, ver. 8, it is affirmed that their testimony goes to one point, and is harmonious. To say that there are *other* witnesses elsewhere, to say that they are one, contributes nothing to illustrate the nature of the testimony of these three, the water, and the blood, and the spirit; and the internal sense of the passage, therefore, furnishes as little evidence of its genuineness as the external proof." — *Barnes*. The words were probably written in the margin of some ancient copy, as expressing the writer's belief, and were subsequently incorporated with the text by some careless or unscrupulous transcriber, where they maintained their place through the dark ages. Since the revival of letters, their lack of genuineness has been discovered, and they have been pronounced spurious by the best critics. As to the meaning of the genuine terms "the spirit, and the water, and the blood," which "three agree in one" testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus, see note on ver. 6.

9. *If we receive the witness of men.* We are accustomed to believe human

greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eter-

nal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

testimony, both in courts of justice and in the ordinary affairs of life. How much more readily ought we to exercise faith in the divine testimony! Men may honestly state what is not true, through a misapprehension of the facts in the case. God is liable to no such mistake. Men may state what is false, with an intention to deceive; it is "impossible for God to lie." His testimony is of "greater" authority, and should be received or believed without hesitation. ¶ *For this is the witness which he hath testified of his Son.* Namely, that he is the Messiah; "that Jesus is the Son of God." By the voice from heaven, after his baptism, the Spirit of God proclaimed Jesus to be his "beloved Son," Matt. iii. 17; and when he had shed his blood upon the cross "for the remission of sins," Matt. xxvi. 28, he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4. Thus did God bear witness to the Messiahship of his Son by "the spirit, and the water, and the blood." Ver. 8.

10. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.* The Spirit beareth witness to his heart that Jesus is truly the Messiah. See note on Rom. viii. 16. God bears witness to the Messiahship of his Son by the influence of his Spirit. ¶ *He that believeth not God hath made him a liar.* See note on ch. i. 10. ¶ *Because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.* What that record is the apostle declares in ver. 11. "The idea is, that in various ways, at his baptism, at his

death, by the influences of his Spirit, by the miracles of Jesus, &c., God had become a witness that the Lord Jesus was sent by him as a saviour, and that to doubt or deny this partook of the same character as doubting or denying any other testimony; that is, it was practically charging him who bore the testimony with falsehood." — *Barnes*.

11. *And this is the record.* "Meaning to say, that the essential, practical substance of this 'witness of God,' may be divided into two parts; declaring, (1.) that God really has given to us eternal life; and (2.) that this eternal life is granted to us in his Son, that is, through belief in him as the Prince of life." — *Bloomfield*. See notes on John xiv. 6; xvii. 2, 3.

12. *He that hath the Son hath life, &c.* Hath entered upon the present enjoyment of that spiritual or eternal life, of which believers have a foretaste here, but of which the full fruition is reserved unto that state wherein we shall be "the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." John v. 24; Eph. ii. 1; 1 Tim. iv. 10. ¶ *And he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.* See note on John iii. 36.

13. *These things have I written.* All the things contained in this epistle indiscriminately, and especially the testimony concerning Jesus Christ as the Son of God, through whom the rich gift of eternal life is communicated to men. ¶ *That ye may know that ye have eternal life.* "The thing witnessed being 'that God hath given us eternal life through his Son,' he who believeth on the Son of God may justly be said to have eternal life, the thing

14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask,

witnessed, in himself, because by his faith on the Son, being begotten of God, he hath, in the dispositions of God's children, communicated to him, eternal life begun in him, which is both a pledge and a proof that God, in due time, will completely bestow on him eternal life, through his Son." — *Macknight*. ¶ *And that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.* To believe on his name is to believe on himself. Those whom the apostle addressed were already believers, as is manifest from the first clause of this verse; hence we must understand him to mean that he wrote these things in order to confirm their faith, and to fortify their minds against temptation to apostasy.

14, 15. *And this is the confidence, &c.* See notes on Matt. vii. 7, 8.

16. *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death.* Notwithstanding the general assurance, in ver. 14, 15, that God hears and answers the prayers of his children, the apostle here intimates that discretion should be observed not only in regard to the nature of the objects prayed for, but also in regard to the persons in whose behalf intercessions are made. If any one suffer on account of a "sin which is not unto death," we may confidently pray for his relief. But "there is a sin unto death;" and the apostle intimates the inefficiency of prayers for such as are thus guilty. There has been much controversy concerning the nature of this "sin unto death." My prescribed limits will not permit an examination of all the interpretations which have been given of this phrase. The following seems more natural and reasonable, more in conformity with the apostle's language, than any other: "If any of your society is visited with sickness for his sins, let public prayers be made, and if his sins be not of such a nature as God may think fit to punish

we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them

with death (in which case the offender must be left to the divine mercy), the devout prayers of the church will be heard." — *Gilpin*. "If a Christian, by an impulse of the spirit, perceives that any Christian brother has sinned such a sin as to draw down upon himself a disease, which is not to end in death, but to be miraculously cured by him, then let him pray to God, and God, in answer to his prayer, will grant life and perfect health unto such Christians as have sinned a sin which is not to end in death. There is a sin which draws down a disease upon Christians that is to end in death. I do not say or mean that any Christian shall pray for that, because, in such a case, God would not hear his prayer, nor miraculously cure his Christian brother, at his request." — *Benson*. "Some understand this to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, Matt. xii. 31, which, however, is not very probable; others, that it is impenitence. See Heb. vi. 4-6; x. 26. But it appears rather that this passage treats of some of those sins which incur temporal death, as in Acts v. 5; 1 Cor. xi. 30-32. St. John probably here alludes to the distinction which the law made among sins. There were those which it pardoned, and for which a sacrifice was offered, the priest praying to God and obtaining his grace for the sinner; but there were others, as wilful murder, adultery, idolatry, for which there was no sacrifice. It did not follow that the sinner was condemned to eternal death; if he repented, he might be saved, though he should suffer the penalty of the law. So, likewise, under the gospel, there were sins which God punished by diseases, as is intimated in those words of Jesus Christ, on healing the sick, '*Your sins be forgiven you,*' and in St. James, v. 15, where the recovery of the sick by prayer is joined with the remission of sins, which were

that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

19 And we know that we are

regarded as the cause of the disease. When, therefore, any Christian had committed one of those sins which the law condemned without mercy, and had afterwards fallen into a dangerous sickness, that sickness was supposed to be the punishment of his sin. I do not say, observes St. John, that you should ask of God recovery and life for such a sinner; it is a sin unto death. God will do with it as he sees fit, and pardon it if he chooses."—*Beausobre and Lenfant*. See notes on Matt. ix. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 30; James v. 14, 15.

17. *All unrighteousness is sin*. See ch. iii. 4. Notwithstanding the distinction between the "sin unto death" and the "sin not unto death," it must not be forgotten that all unrighteousness, every transgression, is sin, and is punishable.

18. *We know that whosoever is born of God, &c.* See notes on ch. iii. 6, 9. ¶ *That wicked one toucheth him not*. He shall not be harmed by the evil which besets him in the form of temptations; or the adversaries who endeavor to crush out the church of Christ by persecution, shall not harm him. See note on John viii. 44.

19. *And we know that we are of God*. That we are under the influence of his Spirit. See note on ch. iii. 14. ¶ *The whole world lieth in wickedness*. "Dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1. A

of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

similar description of the unconverted mass of mankind is given by the apostle Paul, in Rom. iii. 9-20.

20. *We know that the Son of God is come*. See notes on ch. ii. 22; iv. 2. ¶ *And hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true*. He hath revealed the true God as the Father of men. See note on Matt. xi. 27. ¶ *Even in his Son Jesus Christ*. There is nothing in the original answering to the word "*even*," and the sentence is better without it. Whoso dwelleth in Jesus, through a spirit of faith and love, dwelleth also in God, and God in him. See ch. iv. 15. ¶ *This is the true God*. Namely, "him that is true," the Father, who is revealed by the "Son of God." ¶ *And eternal life*. The idea is, that whoso thus dwells with the Father and the Son, and enjoys the influences of the Holy Spirit, is already a partaker of eternal life. See notes on ver. 11-13.

21. *Keep yourselves from idols*. Join not with the heathen in their idolatrous ceremonies, in order to avoid persecution. Beware of apostasy in whatever form. Cleave unwaveringly to the true God, and to his Son Jesus Christ. Then shall the Spirit fill your hearts with peace, and you shall rejoice in the present possession of eternal life.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN.

**T**HE elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

2 For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever.

1. This is the only epistle in the New Testament addressed to a woman. She would seem to have been an eminent sister in the church; but her residence is not indicated, nor any other mark by which she may be identified with any person elsewhere named in the sacred history. The genuineness of this epistle was doubted by some of the ancients; but it is now generally acknowledged. In style it very much resembles the first epistle, justifying a confident belief that both were written by the same person. ¶ *The elder.* "John styleth himself 'an elder,' and so doth Peter, not as laying aside their apostolical power, but as dealing with those to whom they write, in a ministerial way; and by this very title that they assume to themselves, they closely intimate that thenceforward the extraordinary function and gifts apostolic must not be expected, but the ministerial, in the ordinary way of elders and ministers, as the title had been long and vulgarly known. And yet when he speaks of Diotrephes and his abusiveness (3 John 9, 10), he then threatens to show his apostolic power, and himself 'a son of thunder' against him." — *Lightfoot.* ¶ *Unto the elect lady.* For the meaning of *elect*, or *chosen*, see note on Rom. viii. 33. Some suppose the word *κυρία*, *lady*, to be merely a respectful appellation; others regard it as the proper name of the in-

3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received

dividual addressed, namely, Kyria or Kuria. It is of little practical importance which interpretation is correct. The important fact is that she was a Christian woman, as is manifest from the language of the apostle. ¶ *And her children.* Some at least of her children were disciples of Christ. Ver. 4. ¶ *Whom I love in the truth.* "The meaning here is, that he *truly* or *sincerely* loved them. The introduction of the article *the* here, which is not in the original, somewhat obscures the sense, as if the meaning were that he loved them so far as they embraced the truth." — *Barnes.* ¶ *But also all they, &c.* All my fellow-Christians; "all they that have known the truth" that Jesus is the Son of God. 1 John v. 13.

2. *For the truth's sake, &c.* The apostle and his Christian brethren so ardently loved the gospel, the truth concerning Jesus, and the work which he came to perform, that they also loved all others who had "obtained like precious faith." 2 Pet. i. 1. ¶ *Which dwelleth in us.* They were not "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," Eph. iv. 14; but they were steadfast in the faith, notwithstanding all the efforts of their adversaries to coax or drive them into apostasy.

3. *Grace be with you, &c.* See note on Rom. i. 7.

4. *I rejoiced greatly that I found of*

a commandment from the Father.

5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from

the beginning, ye should walk in it.

7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth,

*thy children, &c.* "From this expression Estius inferred that some of this lady's children were not Christians. But I rather suppose, with Grotius, that John speaks of such of her children as in the course of their affairs had come to the place where he was; and that, having conversed with them, he had found them sound, both in the faith and in the practice of the gospel. After they returned home, the apostle inscribed this letter to them, as well as to their mother, and by the commendation which he bestowed on them in it, he no doubt encouraged them much to persevere in the truth." — *Macknight*.

5. *Not as though I wrote a new commandment, &c.* See note on John xiii. 34; 1 John ii. 7, 8. "From the beginning" of the gospel dispensation, the commandment "that we should love one another" had been urged as of prime importance. Obedience to this command was regarded as a test of Christianity. 1 John iii. 14, 15.

6. *This is love, that we walk after his commandments.* This is the prescribed evidence of our love. See notes on John xiv. 15, 21; 1 John iv. 21. ¶ *This is the commandment.* See ver. 5.

7. *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not, &c.* See 1 John ii. 18–22; iv. 2, 3. "This precisely marks the Gnostics, who said that Jesus and the Christ were different persons, or that Jesus had not real flesh, but only the form of a human body, not subject to pain or death." — *Priestley*. ¶ *This is a deceiver and an*

*antichrist.* "Notwithstanding these appellations are in the singular number, they do not denote any particular false teacher, but a number of such; as is plain from the present clause, where it is said, 'many deceivers are entered into the world.' Perhaps the apostle used the singular number emphatically to lead this lady to recollect our Lord's prediction concerning the false teachers who were to arise." — *Macknight*. Thus was the whole sect of the Gnostics grouped together as antichrist.

8. *Look to yourselves, that we lose not, &c.* When the deceivers and false teachers, styled antichrist, were so active in their efforts to lead Christians astray, and to flatter or terrify them into apostasy, by the hope of winning the favor of those who were in authority, or by the fear of persecution, it was highly important that all true believers should look to themselves, lest concerning faith they should make shipwreck, 1 Tim. i. 19, and thus lose the advantage of all the Christian instruction which they had received. Or, if the common reading be preferred, then such caution is necessary, lest the teachers, apostles, and others, should lose the fit reward of their labors, when their converts should fall away and apostatize.

9. *Whosoever transgresseth, &c.* See notes on 1 John ii. 23, 24. "Probably the immediate allusion here is to those to whom John so frequently referred as 'antichrist,' who denied that Jesus had come in the flesh. Ver. 7." — *Barnes*. "Every one that now

and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your

apostatizeth and falls off from the doctrine of Christ to the corruptions of the Gnostics, forsaketh God himself and all piety; and he that adhereth and sticketh fast to the orthodox profession, now it is so opposed, shall be looked on as a truly pious and Christian person." — *Hammond*.

10. *If there come any unto you.* The reference is probably to professed teachers of the gospel. False teachers abounded, ver. 7, and against such the apostle bears testimony. ¶ *And bring not this doctrine.* Namely, "the doctrine of Christ." Ver. 9. Such "deceivers" as "confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" are denounced as "antichrist," ver. 7, and unworthy to be received as Christian teachers. ¶ *Receive him not into your house.* This prohibition is not to be understood in a sense inconsistent with our duty to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, or to administer generally to the wants of the needy. Matt. xxv. 34-46. "This doth not forbid us to show humanity towards a distressed heretic, seeing he ceaseth not to be of the number of those whom we should pity and pray for; but only is a prohibition from doing anything which imports a consent to or approbation of his evil actions." — *Whitby*. "As the receiving any such teacher into one's house, and addressing such a salutation, could not but imply some degree of approbation and countenance to his doctrines, so it is forbidden by the apostle; though by no means out of any uncharitable disposition toward such persons as individuals." — *Bloomfield*. ¶ *Neither bid him God speed.* The word *χαίρει*, here rendered "God speed," is the same which is translated "greeting," Acts xv. 23; xxiii. 26;

house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

12 Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I

Jas. i. 1; and is but another form of that which is rendered "hail," Luke i. 28; "farewell," 2 Cor. xiii. 11; and very frequently "rejoice," as in Luke vi. 23; Rom. xii. 15; Phil. iv. 4. As here used, it is a friendly salutation, expressive of good will and interest in one's welfare. We are bound to cherish and manifest towards all men a spirit of love and good will; but we are equally bound to withhold from the workers of iniquity, and from the teachers of error, even the slightest manifestation of approval, or desire for their success.

11. *Is a partaker of his evil deeds.* Whoso gives encouragement to an evil-doer, or to a "false teacher," by words of approbation, or by expressing wishes for his success, becomes jointly responsible with him for the mischief which he may do; because he thus encourages the wrong-doer or deceiver to persevere in his evil way, and because he thus gives his personal influence in the community to the side of error and wrong.

12. *Having many things to write, &c.* The apostle indicates that he would gladly impart more information than he could conveniently write at that time. This verse bears a striking resemblance to John xxi. 25. ¶ *I would not write with paper.* Paper, such as is now used, was not then manufactured. The word here used probably denotes the *papyrus* (from which indeed paper derives its name), which had taken the place of wax, and metallic plates, and smooth stones, earlier used for the same purpose. ¶ *That our joy may be full.* That we may rejoice in a personal interview, which shall afford opportunity for a free and full interchange of thought and love. See note on 1 John i. 4.



trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

---

13. *The children of thy elect sister greet thee.* As of the "elect lady," ver. 1, so of this "elect sister," we know nothing except that she was a loyal Christian woman; so much is manifest from the manner in which the apostle speaks of her. As she does not personally join with her chil-

13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

---

dren in the salutation, it seems probable that she had departed this life, or that she was at a distance, when the apostle wrote. We may safely suppose that the "children," like the mother, were faithful disciples of Jesus, "the Son of God."

## THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN.

---

**T**HE elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

2 Beloved, I wish above all

1. The genuineness of this epistle was doubted by some in the early age of the church; but it is now generally acknowledged to have been written by the "beloved disciple." The general similarity of style, and the striking resemblance of certain words and phrases, in what are styled the three Epistles of John, naturally point to a single person as their writer. ¶ *The elder.* See note on 2 John i. ¶ *Unto the well-beloved Gaius.* The word ἀγαπητός occurs more than sixty times in the New Testament; it is three times translated *dear*; nine times *dearly-beloved*; three times *well-beloved*; in all other cases *beloved*, which seems to be its proper meaning. "Of the Gaius to whom this epistle is addressed we know nothing, except from this epistle. The design of it was to commend Gaius, probably a person of some consequence, for his perseverance in the faith, and his hospitality to some Christian travelers who had called upon him." — *Bloomfield.* The name Gaius occurs several times in the New Testament, but it is not perfectly plain how many different individuals are denoted. There was one Gaius, a man of Macedonia, and Paul's companion in travel, who was seized by the mob at Ephesus, and ill-treated, Acts xix. 29; there was also a "Gaius of Derbe," a city of Lycaonia, Acts xx. 4, probably a different person from the Gaius of Macedonia. Paul baptized a disciple named Gaius, at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14, and when he wrote

things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 For I rejoiced greatly,

his Epistle to the Romans, being then at Corinth he names "Gaius mine host, and of the whole church," Rom. xvi. 23, probably the same whom he had baptized, and perhaps identical with the Macedonian Gaius. Whether the person named in the text was either of these, or a different person entirely, we have no means to determine. From what is said of his entertainment of strangers, ver. 5, 6, some have conjectured that he was the same who was Paul's "host" at Corinth. ¶ *Whom I love in the truth.* That is, whom I truly love. See note on 2 John i.

2. *Beloved, I wish.* Or, *pray*, as in the margin. The word εὐχομαι denotes fervent desire. ¶ *Above all things.* Or, *in all respects*, or in regard to all things, as the words may properly enough be translated. "The idea is, that John wished earnestly that *in all respects* he might have the same kind of prosperity which his soul had. The common translation '*above all things*' would seem to mean that John valued health and outward prosperity more than he did anything else; that he wished that more than his usefulness or salvation. This cannot be the meaning, and is not demanded by the proper interpretation of the original. The sense is, in every respect, I wish that it may go as well with you as it does with your soul; that in your worldly prosperity, your comfort, and your bodily health, you may be as prosperous as you are in your religion." — *Barnes.*

when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5 Beloved, thou doest faith-

fully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church; whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's

3. *When the brethren came.* It is not absolutely known who these brethren were; but it is very possible that they were the same to whom the apostle refers in ver. 10, as having been discourteously treated by Diotrophes. They may reasonably be supposed to have been sent out on a Christian mission by the apostle, with letters of recommendation to the faithful wherever they might travel, or particularly to the church of which Diotrophes was a member; to have been denied the ordinary rites of hospitality by that church, acting under a malign influence; to have been entertained by Gaius in a generous and Christian manner; and to have rendered to the apostle, on their return, a full account of the abuse and of the kindness which they had received. ¶ *And testified of the truth that is in thee, &c.* Testified that you are steadfast in the faith while others are led away by false teachers, and that your conduct is in accordance with the faith which you profess.

4. *I have no greater joy.* See note on 2 John 4.

5. *Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest.* This, in connection with the preceding verses, may be understood as a commendation of the general Christian character of Gaius. He walked in the truth; that is, he adhered steadfastly to the truth, and carefully conformed his conduct to its requirements. And in all his intercourse with friends or strangers he faithfully performed his duty as a Christian. But, from what follows, the apostle seems to refer specially to the kindness and hospitality extended by Gaius, not only to his necessitous acquaintances, but also to strangers. ¶ *To the brethren.* To Christian brethren

with whom he was well acquainted, as distinguished from *strangers*; perhaps members of his own church, who had need of assistance or encouragement. ¶ *And to strangers.* Supposed to be persons sent by John on a special mission, and entertained by Gaius, when rejected by the church which was under the influence of Diotrophes.

6. *Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church.* The strangers whom Gaius had entertained had returned to the apostle, and declared the loving kindness and the alms-deeds of Gaius. They had borne this testimony openly before the church, — perhaps the church at Ephesus, over which the apostle is supposed to have presided. ¶ *Whom if thou bring forward, &c.* “Whom bringing forward, or having brought forward. The word refers to aid rendered them in their journey, in facilitating their travels, either by personally accompanying them, by furnishing them the means of prosecuting their journey, or by hospitably entertaining them. Probably Gaius aided them in every way in which it was practicable. It has been made a question whether this refers to the fact that he *had* thus aided them in some visit which they had made to the church where Gaius was, or to a visit which they proposed to make. The Greek would seem to favor the latter construction; and yet it would appear from the epistle that the ‘brethren and strangers’ actually had been with him, that they had been rejected by the church through the influence of Diotrophes, and had been thrown upon the hospitality of Gaius, and that they had returned and had borne honorable testimony to his hospitality. These views can be reconciled by supposing, as Lücke does, that having been once

sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to

on their travels, and having shared the hospitality of Gaius, they were purposing to visit that region again, and that John, praising him for his former hospitality, commends them again to him, stating the reason, ver. 9, 10, why he did not, in accordance with the usual custom, recommend them to the care of the church. They had now gone out, ver. 7, on the same errand on which they had formerly gone, and they had now equal claims to the hospitality of the friends of religion."—

*Barnes.* ¶ *After a godly sort.* Or, *worthy of God*, as in the margin. The meaning is, in a manner becoming one who, loving the brethren, and thus dwelling in love, "dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John iv. 16, 21. ¶ *Thou shalt do well.* This is all which is required, in this regard; if you faithfully do this, you will fully perform your duty. See note on Acts xv. 29.

7. *Because that for his name's sake they went forth.* They undertook the journey, not for personal pleasure or profit, but for the sake of the gospel; to extend the knowledge and worship of the true God among the Gentiles. They went in order to be "laborers together with God," 1 Cor. iii. 9, and to cause his name to be "exalted among the heathen." Ps. xlv. 10. They were, therefore, entitled to that hospitality which true Christians uniformly extended to the messengers of divine grace. ¶ *Taking nothing of the Gentiles.* Lest by any possibility they should be suspected of mercenary considerations, many of the early preachers of the gospel declined any recompense for their labor at the hand of the heathen, or those recently converted; but either maintained themselves by the labor of their own hands, or accepted the hospitality of those who were already Christians. See a full illustration of this subject in 1 Cor. ix.

8. *We therefore ought to receive such.* Our Lord directed his apostles, when he

receive such, that we might be fellow helpers to the truth.

9 I wrote unto the church:

first sent them out to preach the gospel: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat." Matt. x. 9, 10. And even when the apostles and early preachers declined to accept maintenance from those to whom they preached, they had a righteous claim on their brethren in the faith for the supply of their necessary wants, inasmuch as they sacrificed their time and strength for the common benefit of the church, and not for their individual advantage. ¶ *That we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.* Although the exhortation is designed primarily for Gaius alone, the apostle gives it in a general form, because it expresses a general principle. We are all bound to do good as we have opportunity. But all cannot perform the same service, nor should they; different duties are assigned to different individuals. See 1 Cor. xii. 4–31. All cannot go to preach the gospel to unbelievers; but those who remain at home, to perform other perhaps equally important duties, may assist in defraying the expenses of those who "go forth for his name's sake," or extend hospitality to them whenever they have opportunity, and thus become "fellow-helpers to the truth."

9. *I wrote unto the church.* Namely, on behalf of the preachers before-mentioned, when "for his name's sake they went forth." Ver. 7. They were commended to the care and hospitality of the church, as was then the custom. See notes on Rom. xvi. 1, 2. ¶ *But Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.* "It would seem that Diotrephes had, by his turbulent and ambitious spirit, set at naught or weakened the effect of a letter lately written by John to the church, with the above-mentioned view; and that the apostle complains of this interference with his duties. I agree with Lücke, that the letter in

but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church.

11 Beloved, follow not that

which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

12 Demetrius hath good report of all *men*, and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:

14 But I trust I shall shortly

question, evidently not preserved, was a mere private letter, introductory of such travelling brethren, especially missionaries, as should come. The purpose of it, however, was thwarted, if not nullified, by the hostile influence, powerful it seems by position or by office of Diotrophes, of whom John complains in the words *οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται ἡμᾶς*, 'refuses to recognize my authority to direct, or admit the wisdom of my monitions.'—*Bloomfield*. "The single word, rendered 'who loveth to have the pre-eminence,' occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means simply 'who loves to be first,' meaning that he loved to be at the head of all things, to rule, to lord it over others. It is clearly supposed here, that the church would have complied with the request of the writer, if it had not been for this man."—*Barnes*. The specifications of this general charge are found in ver. 10.

10. *Wherefore, if I come*. The apostle seems to have intended a visit to Gaius, and the church of which he was a member. *¶ I will remember the deeds which he doeth*. "Greek, 'I will make mention of.' I will speak of them publicly there, to his disgrace."—*Assemb. Annot.* This may be regarded as an intimation that he would exert his apostolic power, and administer suitable rebukes and discipline to Diotrophes, for his contumacious conduct. The meaning is similar to that which Paul expresses in more forcible terms. See notes on 1 Cor. iv. 19–21; 2 Cor. x. 2, 10, 11; xiii. 10. *¶ Prating*

*against us with malicious words*. Or, evil, injurious words. *¶ And not content therewith*. Not contented to express his rebellious spirit in words only. *¶ Neither doth he himself receive the brethren, &c.* He manifests his contumacy by deeds, refusing to receive the brethren at my request, and "forbidding them that would," and thus prevents the church from exercising Christian hospitality. Under such circumstances, Gaius had extended kindness "to the brethren and to strangers," for which the apostle commends him; and he is now invited to assist them on their second journey, because the apostle had no reason to expect such courtesy from Diotrophes. See ver. 5, 6.

11. *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good*. See note on Rom. xii. 9. The exhortation is general in form; yet it probably had particular allusion to the conduct of Diotrophes, and was designed to caution Gaius against any possible temptation to imitate his evil example. *¶ He that doeth good, &c.* See notes on 1 John iii. 6–9.

12. *Demetrius hath good report, &c.* We have no further information concerning this disciple. He may have been well known to Gaius; or possibly he was the bearer of this epistle, and commended to his Christian confidence by the apostle. *¶ And we also bear record, &c.* See note on John xxi. 24.

13, 14. *I had many things to write, &c.* See note 2 John 12. *¶ Peace be to thee*. This is John's form of bene-

see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace *be* to thee.

---

diction, quoted literally from his record of our Lord's benediction. John xx. 19, 21, 26. ¶ *Our friends salute thee*. Rather, the friends salute thee; that is, the Christian brethren who are with me; the word *our* was unneces-

*Our* friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

---

rily inserted by the translators. ¶ *Greet the friends by name*. Salute them individually on my behalf, as if I had designated every brother and sister by name.

## THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

---

**J**UDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called :

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

1. The authenticity of this epistle was doubted for a time, but is now generally acknowledged. It was probably written before the destruction of Jerusalem, because, as has been observed by Michaelis and others, in mentioning sundry manifestations of divine justice in the punishment of sinners, he would probably have referred to this most conspicuous example, if Jerusalem had already been destroyed. The general purpose of the epistle seems to be, to caution those to whom it was addressed against the errors and vices taught and practised by the early heretics who had "crept in unawares." Ver. 4. It is addressed generally to all Christians; but it is supposed to have been specially designed for the converted Jews, who were scattered through the East, sometimes styled the Eastern Dispersion, in Asia Minor and beyond the Euphrates. ¶ *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ.* The writer does not style himself an "apostle," but, like his brother James, is content to be known as a "servant of Jesus Christ." Jas. i. 1. In like manner, Paul and Peter, who were certainly among the "very chiefest apostles," and who assumed that title in their epistles, acknowledged themselves also to be *servants* of Jesus Christ. Rom. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1. ¶ *And brother of James.* That is, of "James the less," son of Alphaeus, and kinsman of our

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Lord. See note on Matt. xiii. 55. ¶ *To them that are sanctified, &c.* See note on Rom. xv. 16; 1 Cor. i. 2. ¶ *Preserved in Jesus Christ.* "Kept steadfast in the faith to which they had been called by the grace of God." — *Bloomfield.* See also note on 1 Pet. i. 5-7. ¶ *Called.* See note on Rom. i. 6.

2. *Mercy unto you, &c.* This differs somewhat from other apostolic benedictions recorded in the New Testament, but is substantially of the same nature. See note on Rom. i. 7.

3. *Beloved, when I gave all diligence, &c.* "The full sense is, when I made it my earnest business to write unto you concerning the common salvation, that in which we have a common interest, I judged it needful to write unto you in language exhorting you to earnestly contend for the maintenance of the faith once for all delivered to the saints." — *Bloomfield.* "Here we clearly see that the object of this epistle was to preserve the Christians in their adherence to the proper church of Christ, established by the apostles, in opposition to others who made innovations; and these we know were, in those times, the Gnostics only. All the characters by which he describes those whose opinions or practices he censures, were either avowedly maintained by them, or generally ascribed

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men,

to them." — *Priestley*. ¶ *Of the common salvation*. The salvation in which all men have a common interest, inasmuch as it was wrought for all by Him "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. ¶ *Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*. Cleave steadfastly to the gospel revealed to his servants by our Lord and his chosen apostles, and resolutely defend it against the attacks of all adversaries. The reason is assigned in ver. 4; false teachers had "crept in," whose instructions corrupted the morals of their followers, and tended to the destruction of their faith. Of course the apostle does not counsel the employment of physical force or violence in contending for the faith; but the diligent use of right reason and sound argument. "The sword of the Spirit" is more effectual for this purpose than all the carnal weapons which human ingenuity and depravity have devised.

4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares*. "The Apostle Peter, describing these same persons, says, 'who *privily* shall bring in damnable heresies.' See 2 Pet. ii. 1. Substantially the same idea is expressed here by saying that they 'had crept in unawares;' that is, they had come in by stealth; they had not come by a bold and open avowal of their real sentiments. They professed to teach the Christian religion, when, in fact, they denied some of its fundamental doctrines; they professed to be holy, when, in fact, they were living most scandalous lives. In all ages there have been men who were willing to do this for base purposes." — *Barnes*. ¶ *Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation*. "Greek, of whom it was *before written* that this should be their condemnation. For, that this cannot be meant of any divine ordina-

tion or appointment of them to eternal condemnation is evident, because it cannot be thought, without horror, that God doth thus ordain men to perdition before they had any being," &c. — *Whitby*. "For many deceivers are now abroad in the world (as it was prophesied there should be), &c. Thus I should translate the words of *old ordained to this condemnation*." — *Gilpin*. "The way to interpret this, as almost any other difficulty in this epistle, will be by comparing it with the *second* of Peter, which is almost parallel to this. There these men are spoken of, ch. ii. 3, and the passage that there seems parallel to this, is, ver. 1, 'bringing on themselves swift destruction,' and, for whom judgment for some while lingereth not, and their destruction doth not nod,' ver. 3, which signifies in both places the certain and quick destruction that is likely to come upon those men who, by complying with the Jews, and professing themselves to be such, to avoid their persecutions, are by the Roman destroyers taken for Jews, and so speedily (soon after this time) devoured. Only in this place is mentioned the being 'formerly set forth,' or 'written of,' answerable to which is 2 Pet. ii. 1, 'among you shall be false teachers,' which, being an affirmation that *there shall be*, must be grounded on some prophecy or prediction that there should. And that is clearly to be found in Christ's prediction of the destruction of the Jews, Matt. xxiv. 11, before which *there should come false prophets*, all one with the *false teachers* in St. Peter, by which the Gnostics are certainly to be understood. And therefore at the writing of St. Jude's epistle, these being actually come in, he speaks not of them by way of prophecy, that they *shall come*, but applies to them the former prophecy, that they are the men that were *before written or prophesied* of by Christ in the gospel of St. Matthew, and so



5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once

knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of

capable of that title. Instead of this, when St. John speaks of this very matter, 1 John ii. 18, he says, 'As ye have heard that antichrist cometh, so now there are many antichrists, by which,' saith he, 'we know that it is the last hour;' just as St. Matthew had made it a prognostic of the coming of that *fatal period* of the Jews. By this it appears, first, that *πάλαι* *formerly*, here refers to Christ's time, *προγεγραμμένοι*, *forewritten of*, to Matt. xxiv., or the passage there set down and *τὸ κρίμα*, *judgment*, or *condemnation*, to that great destruction that should fall about that time upon all the obdurate, unbelieving Jews and false teachers, Gnostics, or other abominable Christians, whose sin is set down in the following words, *impious*, &c., their *judgment or condemnation* in these. — And that not only their sin, their false doctrine, and sly coming in was foretold, but their punishment and destruction also (by this famous coming of Christ to the destruction of his crucifiers) appears 2 Thess. ii. 8, where St. Paul, foretelling it, most probably refers to some prediction of Christ to this matter. And such is that of Matt. xvi. 25, that 'they that will save their lives shall lose them,' and only they that hold out and continue constant in their confession of Christ, shall escape this ruin, Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13. And so this is the full meaning of this phrase; men whose impostures first, and then their vengeance also, have been foretold by Christ." — *Hammond*. ¶ *Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness*. "Abusing the doctrines of grace so as to give indulgence to corrupt and carnal propensities. That is, probably, they gave this form to their teaching, as Antinomians have often done, that by the gospel they were released from the obligations of the law, and might give indulgence to their sinful passions, in order that grace might abound." — *Barnes*. Against this heresy, Paul bears open testimony. Rom. iii. 8; vi. 1, 2. See also note

on Rom. ii. 4. ¶ *Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. This is charged by John, as characteristic of antichrist, by whom he means the "false teachers" who had "crept in unawares," as other apostles describe them. See 1 John ii. 18–23.

5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance*. The apostle proceeds, in ver. 5–7, to cite several instances in which divine justice was manifested in the punishment of iniquity. This portion of the epistle is very similar to 2 Pet. ii. 4–9; so much so, that some have imagined that one of the writers quoted from the other, or that both quoted from a common origin. One important difference between the two, however, is very obvious. Jude cites his examples for the single purpose of showing that, as the wicked in former ages had received condign punishment, so should the ungodly men whom he describes be justly and adequately punished; but Peter, in citing the same examples, by mentioning the preservation of a few, when the many were destroyed, manifests a double purpose, namely, to warn the ungodly, and to encourage the hearts of the faithful. The lesson which he draws from the administration of divine justice in former ages, he expresses thus: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be punished." 2 Pet. ii. 9. ¶ *The Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt*. Namely, when he led them forth by his servant Moses, as described in the Book of Exodus. ¶ *Afterward destroyed them that believed not*. Even his chosen people could not sin with impunity; but having been highly distinguished, they afterwards suffered the just penalty of their unbelief and unrighteousness. See notes on 1 Cor. x. 1–12. It is not unlikely that the general reference here is to Numb. xiv. 26–37. Moses mentions the preservation of a few, when the many perished; which fact, though unnoticed by Jude,

the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left

would doubtless have been mentioned by Peter, as perfectly suited to his purpose, if he had cited this instance of divine retribution. But it is probable that there is a special reference here to the destruction of the "twenty and four thousand" at Shittim where "the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab." Numb. xxv. 1-9. Concerning these daughters of Moab, Moses said, "Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord." Numb. xxxi. 16. That Jude had this sin and its punishment in view appears from ver. 11, where he says the persons whose punishment he predicts "ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." See 2 Pet. ii. 15.

6. *And the angels which kept not their first estate, &c.* The parallel passage is, 2 Pet. ii. 4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." Within my prescribed limits, I cannot fully discuss the various questions concerning these *angels*, which have so sorely perplexed theologians. A few brief remarks must suffice. Many have believed that there was once a revolt in heaven; that some of the *angels*, conspicuous in rank, dignity, and influence, rebelled against God, and were consequently thrust out of heaven. To this revolt, and to these rebels and their punishment, the apostle has been understood here to refer. Against this theory, the following are some of the more obvious objections: (1.) It is inconsistent with the scriptural representations of heaven, as the abode of holiness and peace. The phrase, "there was war in heaven," Rev. xii. 7, is not an exception to the general truth. Most commentators agree that this "war in heaven" denotes a fierce and sharp struggle among men on earth. "War

in heaven: a great battle in the church of God. For the dragon could not fight in the highest heaven; there is no war there."—*Assemb. Annot.* "We have here a visionary scene presented to the mind of the apostle, of which the allegory is variously interpreted; but, perhaps, best by Mede, Newton, Newcome, and Bishop Horsley, as representing the vehement struggles between Christianity and Paganism during the first ages of the gospel."—*Bloomfield.* (2.) It is equally inconsistent with the general character which the Scriptures ascribe to the angels of heaven. They are represented as glorifying God, when he manifested his purpose to destroy sin, and to establish universal holiness, and as rejoicing in the execution of that purpose when even "one sinner repenteth." Luke ii. 9-14; xv. 7, 10. Moreover, our Lord declared that the "children of the resurrection" are "as the angels of God in heaven," or "equal unto the angels," Matt. xxii. 30; Luke xx. 36; evidently indicating a state of purity and happiness. A rebellious spirit—a disposition and ability to set all heaven in an uproar, resulting in defeat and perpetual banishment—can scarcely be regarded as legitimate objects of Christian hope; nor would the promise of such a precarious condition in the future life yield the highest degree of present satisfaction. But resemblance to the angels is proposed by our Lord to his disciples, as one of the blessings to be hoped for and expected. (3.) If the common doctrine concerning the sin and fall and punishment of angels "is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. iii. 16, we might reasonably expect it to be distinctly set forth by the sacred writers; the more because it is in itself so improbable, not to say incredible. Instead of this, we find it mentioned nowhere else in the Scriptures; and if it be mentioned here, it is only incidentally, by way of

their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains

example and illustration. The apostles were predicting the "swift destruction" of the "false teachers" in the church, whom they accused both of heresy and of gross sensuality. The fate of the "angels that sinned," the destruction of the old world by water, and of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, and the perishing of the Jews in the wilderness, who had been delivered out of the land of Egypt, are cited merely as examples of divine justice, in the punishment of transgressors. (4.) All these examples are mentioned as being well known and perfectly familiar to the persons addressed; and all, except that of the angels, are drawn from Scripture history; but concerning this one, if it be rightly interpreted to mean the fall of angels from heaven, the Scriptures are silent. This circumstance alone is sufficient to render such an interpretation suspicious and doubtful. (5.) All the other examples are drawn from the sinfulness and punishment of mankind. The introduction of superhuman persons and crimes, in such a connection, seems out of place. (6.) In the allegations against the "ungodly men," mentioned by Jude, or the "false teachers," as Peter styles them, and in all the illustrative examples cited from ancient history, while a state of general sinfulness and corruption is recognized, one particular form of iniquity has conspicuous prominence. The false teachers are represented as "walking after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness;" "having eyes full of adultery;" "alluring through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who lived in error;" "walking after their own ungodly lusts;" and "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." 2 Pet. ii. 10, 14, 18; Jude 4, 18. Of a similar character are the examples of a righteous retribution cited for illustration. Lasciviousness or sensuality is the prominent sin charged upon the antediluvians; the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were notoriously guilty of licentiousness and the crime

against nature; the Israelites, who had escaped out of the land of Egypt, perished for their whoredoms; see note on ver. 5; and, as we might expect from finding them grouped in such company, the "angels which kept not their first estate" are said to have sinned "in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh." Ver. 7. The original here is even more definite than the common translation: "In like manner to these, giving themselves over," &c. In like manner to whom? Manifestly to the "angels" here mentioned. The word *τούτοις*, *to these* or *to them*, cannot properly be understood to refer to Sodom and Gomorrah, used figuratively for their inhabitants, because these would require a pronoun in the feminine gender. The proper antecedent is *ἁγγέλους*, *angels*, in ver. 6. But such sins as are here described are inconsistent with any reasonable conception of the nature and character of the angels of heaven. Even the holy relation of marriage does not exist among them; much less, promiscuous sexual intercourse. Matt. xxii. 30. For these and other sufficient reasons, we cannot properly suppose the apostles to refer to the heavenly host when speaking of the "angels that sinned," or which kept not their first estate." To whom, then, do they refer? The general answer is, *to men*. The word *ἄγγελος*, *angel*, denotes the *office* rather than the *nature* of the person or thing to which it is applied. Though generally indicating superhuman beings, it often denotes simply men, both in the LXX. and in the New Testament. Thus "the messengers returned to Jacob," who had sent them to make his peace with Esau. Gen. xxxii. 6. "And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the King of Edom." Numb. xx. 14. The priest "is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." Mal. ii. 7. "This is he of whom it is written, behold, I send my messenger before thy face." Matt. xi. 10. "When the messengers of John were departed." Luke vii. 24. Jesus "sent messengers

under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

before his face." Luke ix. 52. In all these and many similar places, the word translated *messengers* is the same which is ordinarily translated *angels*. Indeed, the same word is applied to what is generally understood to have been a bodily disease, which Paul styles an *angel*, or a "messenger of Satan." 2 Cor. xii. 7. "The *angels* of the seven churches," Rev. i. 20, and the seven repetitions of the word in the succeeding chapters, evidently denote the ministers of those churches. There is good reason to believe that the apostles here used this word to denote men, whose station in life, or responsibility for trust committed to them, might entitle them to this appellation. But if the reference be to men, then to what men? To this question various answers have been given. Some say Korah and his company, whose sad history is related in Numb. ch. xvi. Others say, "the men which Moses sent to spy out the land" of Canaan, some of whom suffered condign punishment for their unfaithfulness, as recorded in Numb. ch. xiii., xiv. In my judgment, however, the following interpretation bears stronger marks of probable correctness. The language of the apostles "has been thought to prove the fall of angels from their original station in heaven. But as all the other examples here mentioned are from the Old Testament history, and we have no other account of this fall of angels, it is probable that it is only an allusion to some circumstance or other in the writings of Moses. Various have been the conjectures of learned men on the subject; but what appears to me the most probable is that which was suggested by Mr. Palmer, in the 'Theological Repository,' vol. v. p. 166; which is, that they were those who, in the account of the antediluvians, are called "the sons of God," a term which in the LXX. is often rendered 'angels,' and who, with the rest of the old world, were destroyed in the deluge, when Noah and his family were saved. This makes the

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about

whole a connected series of examples, for the others follow in the order of time, the next being that of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah." — *Priestley*. Among the many reasons which render this interpretation probable, I shall mention only three. (1.) The transgression of these "sons of God" was recorded by Moses, and familiar to the Jews as a historical fact; and these persons were men, like the transgressors mentioned in the other examples. So much, however, is true in regard to Korah, and to those who were sent to explore the land of Canaan, and to many others who sinned and suffered condign punishment. But the licentiousness, or sensuality, implied in the language concerning the "angels that sinned," has a parallel in the case of the "sons of God," which we fail to discover in the character attributed to the other transgressors. The general allegation against the antediluvians is, "that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." But the specific charge is, "that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." Gen. vi. 1-8. "Through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness," they took many "wives of all which they chose;" moreover, they "gave themselves over to fornication, and went after strange flesh," disregarding the line of distinction established between the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men." (2.) It is observable that Peter cites historical examples in proof that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation," as well as how to "reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Pet. ii. 9. From the deluge, he assures us, "Noah, a preacher of righteousness," was preserved, and "just Lot" was spared when Sodom and Gomorrah were turned into ashes." But if the "angels that sinned" were a distinct superhu-

them in like manner, giving | themselves over to fornication,

man class, who among them was delivered? And what relevancy has their fate as an illustration of the "goodness and severity of God"? On the contrary, if we understand 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5, as a single example, that is, if we understand the "angels that sinned" to be a portion of the "old world," a constituent part of that corrupt generation, whose "wickedness was great in the earth," insomuch that "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth," and he said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth," Gen. vi. 5-7, then the example furnishes a vivid illustration of what is asserted in ver. 9, that God knoweth both how to deliver and how to punish. The "godly" Noah is delivered, while "the world of the ungodly" are punished, including among others those who are styled "angels," or "children of God." This supposition seems the more probable, when it is considered that Jude does not mention the deluge at all, unless it be included in the judgment executed upon the "angels which kept not their first estate." It seems scarcely credible that he would entirely omit such a well-known and signal example of divine justice, when he cited others of far less magnitude and importance; especially if, as many suppose, he had seen the Epistle of Peter, and copied from it. The most natural supposition is that he regarded the sin of the "angels" as a portion of that aggregated iniquity which was punished by the deluge; so that by mentioning that iniquity and its punishment, he substantially referred to the deluge without specifically naming it. In like manner, Moses treats the iniquity of the "sons of God" as a part, and indeed the most conspicuous part, of that general corruption of the old world, which was punished by the deluge. He declares that the punishment should be executed after a respite of "a hundred and twenty years," distinctly indicating the deluge as that punishment. "They are here certainly the wicked men of the old world, on whom

the flood came, called 'the world of the ungodly,' 2 Pct. ii. 5, which are there joined with the wicked of Sodom. From whence and from some other evidences, it is probably to be concluded what their sin was which brought the flood upon them, namely, the sin of unnatural uncleanness, or sodomy, contrary to that breath of God breathed on them, the light of law, and reason, and nature, and the very soul within them. For so Gen. vi. 2, upon 'the sons of God taking them wives of the daughters of men,' presently follows the decree of God to send the deluge upon them." — *Hammond*, on 1 Pet. iii. 20. (3.) It is a fact well authenticated, that the Jews, in the apostolic age, and for some time previously, supposed the "sons of God," Gen. vi. 2-4, to be apostate angels; and many of the early fathers of the church entertained the same opinion. In the apocryphal Book of Enoch, referred to in ver. 14, this idea is elaborated at great length. In referring, therefore, to the sin and punishment of these "sons of God," the apostles might properly enough style them "angels that sinned," or "angels which kept not their first estate," as the reference would be readily understood; especially when the character ascribed to them corresponded so well with the Mosaic record. But because the apostles used the phraseology to which the Jews were accustomed, it need not be supposed that they vouched for the accuracy of Jewish opinions. They referred to the "angels that sinned," not for the purpose of defining their nature, whether human or otherwise, but merely as an illustration of the truth that gross sin shall receive condign punishment. By such a reference, the apostles no more admitted the truth of the Jewish opinions concerning a literal apostasy of the angels of heaven, than our Lord, by a similar reference, admitted the truth of the heathen opinions concerning the actual existence of Mammon. See note on Matt. vi. 24. But if the "sons of God"

and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example,

who took wives of the "daughters of men" were not apostate angels, as many of the Jews believed, who were they? Let a very eminent Hebrew scholar answer. "Of the phrase 'the sons of God,' Gen. vi., and Job i. All take this phrase in Job to mean 'the angels,' and truly, in which sense, while they have taken it in the sixth of Genesis, they spoil all; for hence they think that angels lay with women, and begat children. So can Jarchi almost find in his heart to think; and so Tertullian, Lactantius, and others. — Both the Chaldees, Onkelos, and Jonathan, render the 'sons of Elohim,' the 'sons of the potentates or judges,' taking the word 'Elohim,' in the same sense that it is taken in the middlemost verse of the Book of Exodus; 'thou shalt not curse Elohim,' or 'the judges.' This opinion is far better than the former; but Christians have a better than this; that the house and progeny of holy Seth are the sons of God, or the church; and the brood of Cain's females were the daughters of men." "The last verse of the fourth chapter told of profanation of religion, or idolatry, begun in the family of Cain in the days of Enos; now the beginning of the sixth chapter telleth of corruption crept into the family of Seth, the very church itself; and this, especially by their following the cursed example of Lamech. 'The sons of God,' or the members of the church, and progeny of Seth, marrying carelessly and promiscuously with the 'daughters of men,' or brood of Cain; hence they also became fleshly, like Cain's race; they grew into a giant-like breed, as well as that; and those great ones became tyrannical, as well as the other. Hence was the whole world overspread with cruelty and rapine, and all manner of corruptions, so that the Lord passeth a decree upon it for destruction; but to Noah he giveth a promise of preservation, and the platform of an ark, in which he and his should be preserved." — *Lightfoot*, Vol. ii. 78; iv.

12. "There were no Nephilim, that is, giants, in the world, before the 'sons of God,' namely, the race of Seth, married the 'daughters of men,' namely, the race of Cain. The Chaldee Version, Symmachus, the Arabic, Oleaster, Abenezra, Solomon Jarchi, Vatablus, Fagius, &c., render, 'the sons of the princes seeing the daughters of men;' Aquila, 'the sons of the gods;' Theodotion and the Vulgate, 'the sons of God.' The Hebrew word *Elohim*, as before said, may signify gods, angels, princes, chiefs. Lactantius, l. ii. c. 14, understood this to mean angels; and to this opinion all the ancients adhered. But the later fathers, upon a more accurate examination, asserted that the angels, being incorporeal, could not lust after women, and that by the name 'sons of God' should be understood the sons of Seth, an elect race; and by the name 'daughters of men' the daughters of Cain and his posterity." — *Calmet*. "The 'sons of God' and 'of men' were certainly the worshippers of the one true and the many false gods, and the marrying of those idolaters was the means of ensnaring the godly in the heathen idol-worships, and all the villainies in their practices, or sacrifices, as after it was. Numb. xxv. 2." — *Hammond*. To the same purpose, *Henry*, *Poole*, *Grotius*, and others. Concerning the persons thus styled "angels," or "sons of God," Peter declares generally that they "sinned;" Jude more particularly alleges that they "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation." The word ἀρχή, *first estate*, denotes generally "a beginning, what is first in time or place. (1.) Of time, the beginning, commencement. Matt. xxiv. 8. (2.) Meton. of a person, the first, *primus*, e. g., Christ, Col. i. 18. (3.) Of place, a beginning, extremity, *corner*, e. g., of a sheet. Acts x. 11; xi. 5. (4.) Of rank, dignity, the first place or power; (a) power, dominion, rule; (b) Meton. rulers, magistrates, princes, potentates." — *Robinson*. See note on Eph.

suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, de-

vi. 12. The posterity of Seth, like the Jews at a later period, were a chosen people, so highly distinguished by knowledge, and privileges, and blessings, and comparative purity of conduct, as to be not improperly styled "children of God," or "angels." Yet, like the Jews, they subsequently apostatized, and forfeited their relative superiority; they "kept not their first estate," but lost it by their misconduct. "The words should be rendered, 'by having relinquished their proper situation and sphere of dignity.'"—*Bloomfield*. The word *οικητήριον*, *habitation*, occurs only here and 2 Cor. v. 2; it indicates a dwelling-place. It may here be understood figuratively to denote that the "sons of God," or "angels," forfeited their honorable and dignified position, and became degraded. "The posterity of Seth did not keep by themselves as they ought to have done, both for the preservation of their own purity and in detestation of the apostasy, but intermingled themselves with the excommunicated race of Cain."—*Henry*. The literal fact may, perhaps, be included, that they forsook the land of their fathers, which was their proper "habitation," and dwelt with their idolatrous wives, in the land of Cain. ¶ *He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness*. Peter expresses the same idea somewhat differently: "Cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness." The simple idea is, imprisoned them. See note on 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. The word *ταρταρώνας*, *cast down to hell*, occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It alludes to Tartarus, the name given by the heathen to the uncomfortable prison-house which they supposed to exist in the under-world. But this reference need not be understood as affirming the truth of the heathen doctrine concerning such a place, any more than our Lord's use of the word Hades should be regarded as an acknowledgment that the Jews rightly

understood that word. See note on Luke xvi. 19–31. The "everlasting chains," or "chains of darkness," are a natural accompaniment of a secure and dark prison-house, and serve to make the figure more life-like. This absolute confinement, in connection with what follows, denotes the certainty of the retribution which awaited "the angels that sinned." ¶ *Unto the judgment of the great day*. Or, as Peter more generally expresses it, *to be reserved unto judgment*. These phrases, like *day of judgment*, are understood by many to refer to a period yet future, when final judgment shall be pronounced on each individual, in the presence of the assembled universe, to be followed by the endless happiness of some, and the endless misery of others. That Peter did not intend to convey any such idea is manifest from the manner in which he uses the word *judgment*. Of the "false teachers," he says, their "judgment now of a long time lingereth not;" that is, is near at hand. And, to express the same idea, he says, "the Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." That *day of judgment lingered not*, was not postponed for countless ages, but was even then at the door. See James v. 8, 9. To illustrate this fact, he says the "angels that sinned" were "reserved unto judgment." Their punishment was delayed for a season; but it came surely, and in full measure. 2 Pet. ii. 3, 4, 9. "In the day of judgment, or punishment, a day in which God should send punishment on that particular city, or on that person, for their crimes; so the day of judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah was the time in which the Lord destroyed them by fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven."—*Clarke*, on Matt. x. 15. Thus also we may reasonably conclude that both Peter and Jude, by the "judgment" and the "judgment of the great day," referred to the period when the "angels that sinned," or

spise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the dev-

the "sons of God" who defiled themselves with idolatrous women, suffered the punishment which God denounced, saying, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth." Gen. vi. 7. The execution of this judgment was delayed somewhat more than a century, "while the ark was a-preparing." 1 Pet. iii. 20. "The Lord said, my Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." Gen. vi. 3. "It is evident that they were allowed sixscore years to repent in, and avert the judgment. Behold, I have given them that space, that they might repent, said the Jerusalem Targum."—*Hammond*. Through such a long period, the transgressors were "reserved unto judgment," just as securely and certainly as if loaded with chains and consigned to the darkest dungeon. As human life at that period was measured by centuries, nearly approaching the full term of a thousand years, it cannot be reasonably objected that, during this interval, which seems so long to us, natural death would remove most of the transgressors beyond the reach of the judgment specially denounced. Thus understood, the apostolic reference is perfectly consistent with the facts recorded by Moses.

7. *Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, &c.* See note on 2 Pet. ii. 6, 7. ¶ *In like manner.* The original word *τούτοις* to these, or to them, has no equivalent in the common translation. The phrase is more accurately rendered, "in a manner like to these."—*Macknight*. Or, "in like manner with them."—*Haweis*. ¶ *Giving themselves over, &c.* In like manner with the "angels which kept not their first estate," the inhabitants of "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them," abandoned themselves to gross sensuality, and in due time suffered condign punishment. See note on ver. 6. ¶ *Are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.*

"That this is spoken not of the cities themselves, but of the inhabitants which dwelt in them, that is, of them who had given themselves over to fornication, and gone after strange flesh, is evident; but yet I conceive they are said to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, not because their souls are at present punished in hell-fire, but because they and their cities perished by that fire from heaven which brought a perpetual and irreparable destruction on them and their cities."—*Whitby*. "By their suffering the punishment of eternal fire, St. Jude did not mean that those wicked persons were then, and would be always, burning in hell-fire. For he intimates that what they suffered was set forth to public view, and appeared to all, as an example (or specimen) of God's displeasure against vice. The fire which consumed Sodom, &c., might be called eternal, as it burned till it had utterly consumed them beyond the possibility of their ever being inhabited or rebuilt. St. Peter has well expressed it, in saying *God reduced them to ashes*. But the word will have a yet more emphatical meaning, if (as several authors affirm) that fire continued to burn a long while; nay, that even to the time of the writing of this epistle, and afterwards, smoke and small flame did sometimes break out."—*Benson*.

8. *Defile the flesh, &c.* See note on 2 Pet. ii. 10.

9. *Yet Michael the archangel, &c.* The parallel place is 2 Pet. ii. 11: "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord." An obvious remark is, that Peter's declaration that the angels, though more powerful, did not bring "railing accusation against them," that is, against the "dignities," or rulers mentioned in the previous verse, is equivalent to Jude's assertion, that "Michael, the archangel," did not bring a "railing accusation" against



il he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

the "devil." "Not that ever such a dispute was betwixt Michael, or Christ, and the devil about Moses' body; but the Jews have such a conceit and story, and we meet with it in their writings; and the apostle useth an argument from their own saying to confute their doing. — In citing the story of Michael the archangel, contending with the devil about the body of Moses, he doth but the same that Paul doth in naming Jannes and Jambres; namely, allege a story which was current and owned among the nation, though there were no such thing in Scripture; and so he argueth with them from their own authors and concessions. It is harsh to strain Zech. iii. 1, 2, to speak such a story, when neither the name Michael is mentioned, nor anything like the body of Moses, or akin to it. But among the Talmudics there seems to be something like the relies of such a matter, namely, of Michael and the angel of death disputing or discoursing about fetching away the soul of Moses. His alleging the prophecy of Enoch is an arguing of the very like nature; as citing and referring to some known and common tradition that they had among them to this purpose. The book 'Sepher Jeshar,' a Hebrew writer, speaketh of Enoch after such a tenor, and in both these he useth their own testimonies against themselves; as if he should thus have spoken at large: 'These men speak evil of dignities,' whereas they have and own a story for current, that even 'Michael the archangel did not speak evil of the devil, when he was striving with him about the body of Moses, &c. And whereas they show and own a prophecy of Enoch, of God coming in judgment, &c., why, these are the very men to whom such a matter is to be applied,' &c. It is no strange thing, in the New Testament, for Christ and the apostles to deal and

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

argue with the Jews upon their own concessions. Not that ever such a dispute was betwixt Michael, or Christ, and the devil, about Moses' body; but the Jews have such a conceit and story, and we meet with it in their writings; and the apostle useth an argument from their own saying to confute their doing." — *Lightfoot*, iii. 328; vii. 179. "Jude, here, then, only reasons with the persons he addresses, on a received story among them, for the purpose of refuting their wicked conduct in speaking evil of dignities. In this he acted as our Lord did, in reasoning on the popular opinion that Satan had bound a woman eighteen years, for the purpose of refuting his adversaries. But the truth of this story is no more admitted in the one case than the correctness of the opinion is in the other. Both are introduced merely for the sake of argument, without any regard to their truth or falsehood. This story about Michael and the devil must have been invented about the time of the Babylonish captivity, or soon after it. Before the captivity we never read of angels having names. Nor before the captivity does it appear that the Jews knew anything about a fallen angel called the devil and Satan." — *Balfour*.

10. *But these speak evil, &c.* See note on 2 Pet. ii. 12.

11. *Woe unto them, &c.* See note on 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16. ¶ *They have gone in the way of Cain.* They have been disobedient and rebellious like Cain. The particulars of this resemblance are not mentioned. See Gen. iv. 1–15. ¶ *And perished in the gainsaying of Korah.* Gainsaying seems to be here used in the sense of insubordination, or resistance to lawful authority. It is said that the Gnostics, against whom the apostle is understood to be here testifying, disavowed all subjection to civil or eccle-

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried

siastical superiors; in which respect they resembled Korah and his company, who rebelled against Moses, and were swallowed up alive in the earth. Numb. xvi. 1-35.

12, 13. *These are spots in your feasts of charity, &c.* "These are unfit to be admitted (as blemished sacrifices were unlawful to be offered) to your festival Christian meetings, adjoined to the sacrament, and coming thither they feed there luxuriously; men that make a show like clouds in the air, as if they had much water in them, for the making men grow and bear fruit in godliness, but indeed are empty and have nothing in them, and consequently are carried about from one vanity to another, as clouds that are easily driven by the wind; trees they are, such as in the autumn defaced and deprived of their very leaves; as for fruit, they are not of the kind that beareth that, for instead of Christian fruits of purity, &c., these Gnostics bring forth all kind of impurities; and so after their Christianity falling back into these villanies, they are twice dead in sin, once before, and then again after their conversion, 2 Pet. ii. 22, and so fit for nothing but eradication, which shall certainly befall them, together with the Jews, with whom they comply and join against the Christians."—*Hammond*. "A feast of charity they turn into wantonness. Like unwholesome air, they blast wherever they come. Like withered trees, they only encumber the ground. Like waves, they spend their rage only in foam. Like uncertain meteors, their light soon sets in darkness. The text says,

about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied

'twice dead;' the apostle may mean that they were once wicked Jews, and having apostatized are now wicked Christians. Or, perhaps he only expresses more strongly their deadness, as Virgil, expressing happiness, says, 'terque quaterque beati.'—*Gilpin*. "*In their feasts of charity*. I see no necessity of referring this to the Christian love-feasts, celebrated after the holy sacrament. It is observed by Dr. Lightfoot, note on 1 Cor. x. 16, that in the evening of the Sabbath, the Jews had their *κοινωνία*, or *communion*, when the inhabitants of the same city met together in a common place to eat together; and that they had near to their synagogues their *ξενοδοχία*, or places where strangers were entertained at the public charge, and where they had their dormitory; these surely were more likely places for such persons to come to, and play their pranks in, than the love-feasts of the Christians.—*Without fruit, twice dead*. That is, saith *Æcumenius*, by casting their fruit and their leaves too, which give a beauty to them; and something like this, saith he, happens to these men, who twice die, casting off their fruit, and putting away the beauty of a sober conversation, whence they are rooted up out of the garden of the church of God.—*Wandering stars*. The Jews, saith *Grotius*, were wont to call them who took upon them to be teachers, *stars*; so the apostle calls these false teachers *wandering stars*, because they kept not their station, but wandered from the truth, having no true light in them."—*Whitby*.

14. *And Enoch also, the seventh from*

of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,

15 To execute judgment up-

on all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed,

*Adam.* That is, the seventh, reckoning Adam as the first. The line of descent is thus recorded by Moses in Gen. ch. v.: Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch. "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years; and Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." ¶ *Propheied of these.* "In reference to these (among others) did Enoch prophesy, saying, Behold, the Lord came, for so I would now render. — The words have now been at length proved to be cited from an apocryphal Book of Enoch, often quoted by the fathers, and which was supposed to be lost, but has lately been discovered in an Ethiopian version at least, which has been edited, with a translation, by Abp. Laurence, Oxford, 1821, who refers the composition to the time of Herod the Great. The quoting from the book in question will by no means invalidate the genuineness of the epistle; for the apostle's quoting as Enoch's a work which was *received* by the Jews as such, will not involve his inspiration; since the promise of preserving the apostles from error, and guiding them into all truth, must be understood, with limitation, to mean all error of any consequence, and all truth important to the purpose of salvation. Now, here Jude's quotation gives no currency to imposture; the apostle merely meaning to apply what was, by tradition, said by Enoch of the antediluvians to the sinners of his own age. In short, the apostle merely adverts to this tradition (without vouching for its truth) as a popular illustration of the weighty maxim, not to speak evil of dignities," &c. — *Bloomfield*. Several commentators still doubt whether the Book of Enoch existed in the apostles' day, or whether it was written at a later period, embodying the tradition to which the apostle refers. There is a general agreement, however, that

the reference to the tradition, whether written or unwritten, should not be understood as vouching for its truth. See note on ver. 9. ¶ *With ten thousand of his saints.* "Or, of his *holy ones*. The word *saints* we now apply commonly to *redeemed* saints, or to Christians. The original word is, however, applicable to all who are *holy*, angels as well as men. — It is a common representation in the Old Testament, also, that God, when he manifests himself, is accompanied by great numbers of heavenly beings. See Ps. lxxviii. 17; Deut. xxxiii. 2." — *Barnes*. Our Lord uses the like figure concerning his own advent to execute judgment. Matt. xvi. 27, 28.

15. *To execute judgment upon all.* To reward them according to their works, whether good or bad. Such is the judgment which the Scriptures assure us shall be executed upon all men. Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 10; Col. iii. 24, 25. But in this place perhaps the reference is, more particularly, to the punishment of the ungodly, for "all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed." ¶ *And to convince.* Rather, to convict. The word used here does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It is defined thus: "To convict fully, to show to be wholly wrong. In the New Testament to rebuke sternly, to condemn, to punish." — *Robinson*. ¶ *All that are ungodly among them, &c.* "That Enoch thus prophesied in his time of these Gnostics, under Christ, we are not told; but that he prophesied to them, that is, that his prophecy concerning the excision of the old world for such sins as these are now guilty of, is very pertinent to them, and fit to be considered by them. Thus we see St. Peter applies to them all the judgments that had ever befallen sinners, particularly that in Noah's time," &c. — *Hammond*. "Whatever Enoch said, or was able to say, on the

and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember

approach of the deluge, might very fitly be referred by Jude to that almost universal slaughter which menaced the contumacious Jews."—*Grotius*. Indeed, the larger part of this epistle, as well as 2 Pet. ch. ii. is designed to impress on the minds of readers the fact, as Peter expresses it, that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be punished," 2 Pet. ii. 9; and to illustrate this fact by examples of the administration of divine justice in former times.

16. *These are murmurers, complainers.* "They murmured against God, on account of the dispensations of his providence, and complained of their condition, fancying that they deserved a better lot. In this, the ungodly teachers resembled the ancient Israelites, who murmured against God on account of the hardships they were exposed to in the wilderness."—*Macknight*. ¶ *Walking after their own lusts.* See 2 Pet. ii. 10. ¶ *Great swelling words.* See 2 Pet. ii. 18. ¶ *Having men's persons in admiration, &c.* Showing great respect to the rich and powerful, from whom they hoped to derive advantage, and slighting the poor and humble. See James ii. 1-9.

17, 18. *But, beloved, remember ye, &c.* See notes on 2 Pet. iii. 1-3. "For the fortifying you against these seducers, do you remember what was foretold by Christ, Matt. xxiv. 10-12, and from him oft repeated by the apostles, particularly St. Peter, 2 Pet. iii. 3; that before the coming of that fatal vengeance on the Jews, there should be an eminent defection among Christians that should fall off to the hating

ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

and reproaching all orthodox constant professors, and give themselves up to impious living."—*Hammond*. These murmurers, complainers, scoffers, or mockers, as they are variously styled, had already made their appearance; and hence the apostle supposed the time to be near at hand when the judgment predicted by our Lord should be executed, when the wicked should be punished, and the faithful Christians be delivered from persecution, and peril, and death. ¶ *Walk after their own ungodly lusts.* Giving free indulgence to their animal propensities. See note on 2 Pet. ii. 10.

19. *These be they who separate themselves.* That is, from the society and communion of faithful disciples. Pretending to be more wise and more pure than others, while in fact they were grovelling in the depths of sensuality, and actually "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness," ver. 4, they withdrew from the assembly of the saints. Heb. x. 25. ¶ *Sensual, having not the Spirit.* "The ungodly teachers boasted of having an illumination from the Spirit, superior to that of the apostle, and that of the disciples of the apostles, and on this pretence they separated themselves and their disciples from the others. But their boasting was without foundation; these men were truly what they called others, mere animal men, not having the Spirit, either of God or of right reason."—*Macknight*. The word *ψυχικοί*, *sensual*, a derivative from *ψυχή*, generally translated *soul*, is here contrasted with *πνεῦμα*, *spirit*, and denotes the animal man, with its lusts and passions, not yet enlightened and purified by the influence of the spirit of holi-

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the

mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the

ness. See notes on Matt. xvi. 26; 1 Cor. ii. 14.

20. *Building up yourselves on your most holy faith.* "It is said here that they were to *build up themselves*; that is, they were to act as moral and responsible agents in this, or were to put forth their own proper exertions to do it. Dependent as we are, and as all persons with correct views will feel themselves to be, yet it is proper to endeavor to do the work of religion as if we had ample power ourselves. The phrase 'most holy faith,' here refers to the system of religion which was founded on faith; and the meaning is, that they should seek to establish themselves most firmly in the belief of the doctrines, and in the practice of the duties of that system of religion." — *Barnes*. In like manner, Paul exhorts his brethren, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 12, 13. ¶ *Praying in the Holy Ghost.* Under the influence, and with the assistance, of the Divine Spirit. See note on Rom. viii. 26.

21. *Keep yourselves in the love of God.* "The phrase, 'the love of God,' may mean either God's love to us, or our love to him. The latter appears, however, to be the sense here, because it is not a subject which could be enjoined, that we should keep up God's love to us. That is a point over which we can have no control, except so far as it may be the result of our obedience; but we may be commanded to love him, and to keep ourselves in that love." — *Barnes*. The exception mentioned in this note is unnecessary. The love of God to his children is not conditional, even in this degree. It does not depend on our obedience. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8.

Obedience, doubtless, has its full reward; but that reward is not the love of God, because that love exists in full force before obedience is rendered. Nor is the love of God to us to be regarded as dependent on our love to him. On the contrary, "we love him because he first loved us." 1 John iv. 19. The proposition, then, is true without any qualification, that "we can have no control" over God's love to us; and the apostolic injunction here is, that we keep alive our love to God. ¶ *Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* Looking for salvation, whether partly in this life, 1 Tim. iv. 10, or wholly in the life to come, not as the reward of our love, or faith, or obedience, but as a free gift bestowed by the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. See notes on Rom. iv. 4, 5.

22, 23. *And of some have compassion, &c.* In connection with ver. 21, "the full sense here seems to be, — and, in the exercise of this vigilant exertion to keep each in the love of God, remember that ye are not to abandon all those that seem to wander from the true faith. No! *some* deal tenderly with, making a due discrimination between, that is, as Dr. Peile adds, 'different phases of Christian character;' others, of a more obstinate character, anxiously endeavor to save, dealing with them as brands snatched out of the burning fire." — *Bloomfield*. Many commentators understand the apostle to direct that gentle means be used with some sinners, moving their hearts, if possible, by an exhibition of divine grace; but that others should be terrified by denunciations of divine wrath, and be held in check by the fear of hell. More reasonable is the following interpretation: "And for others that are any way corrupted by these false teachers, deal with them after differ-

fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

ent manners, as their condition requires; those that waver and are unsteady, rebuke, and so recover them out of their danger with mildness; do not cast them out of the church, deal mildly and mercifully with them, receive and pardon them. And for others that are entangled and corrupted by these seducers, deal with them as the angel did with Lot; proclaim the terrors of the Lord unto them, the approaching destruction that will suddenly overtake them, hasten to fly for their life, to get out of this Sodom — and bring them to a hatred of all the beginnings and least degrees of impurity and uncleanness, as when a man would avoid the infection of the pestilence, he will fly from and not dare to touch any garment of an infected person.” — *Hammond*. Perhaps there may be here a reference to that signal judgment predicted by our Lord, Matt. ch. xxiv., and distinctly referred to by Jude in this epistle; and the particular design may thus be correctly represented. But so far as the exhortation has a general sense, I think the following interpretation more correctly exhibits its design: “‘Some of them snatch from the fire; but when they repent, have mercy upon them in fear.’ — *Syriac*. ‘And some of them rebuke for their sins; and on others have mercy when they are convicted; and others save from the fire, and deliver them.’ — *Erpen’s Arabic*. Mr. Wesley’s note has probably hit the sense: ‘Meantime, watch over others as well as yourselves; and give them such help as their various needs require. For instance, some that are wavering in judgment, staggered by others’, or by their own evil reasoning, endeavor more deeply to convince of the truth as it is in Jesus. Some snatch with a swift and strong hand out of the fire of sin and temptation. On others show compassion in a milder and gentler way; though still with a jealous fear, lest you yourselves be infected with the disease you endeavor to cure. See, therefore, that while ye love the sinners, ye re-

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and

tain the utmost abhorrence of their sins.” — *Clarke*. ¶ *Hating even the garment, &c.* Some contagious diseases are communicated through the garments of infected persons. There is danger in laying hold of such, for the purpose of “pulling them out of the fire.” In like manner, social contact with the wicked is dangerous, even while we seek to reclaim them; and we should seriously take heed lest we fall. 1 Cor. x. 12.

24, 25. *Now unto him that is able, &c.* See notes on Matt. vi. 13; Rom. xi. 36; xvi. 25, 27; 1 Tim. i. 17. “This ascription to one who was able to keep them from falling is made in view of the facts adverted to in the epistle, the dangers of being led away by the acts and the example of these teachers of error.” — *Barnes*. But whatever may have suggested the *form* of the doxology, or to whatever danger and deliverance the apostle may have specially referred, it should be remembered that his language is true in its broadest and most general sense. It is equivalent to the declaration that God is able to keep and to save all his children, in their utmost peril, and to present them “faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.” As the Old Testament commences with the assertion, that “in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth,” it is fitting that this last of the epistles collected in the New Testament should close with the assurance that God is able to govern the world which he has made, and to control the destiny of all its inhabitants. He has declared, by the mouth of his servants, that he “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,” Acts xvii. 26; that he “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,” 1 Tim. ii. 4; and that he “sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” 1 John iv. 14. Yet many have feared that, after all, he will be disappointed; that the depravity and obstinacy of man, or the wiles of the

to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

· 25 To the only wise God our

Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

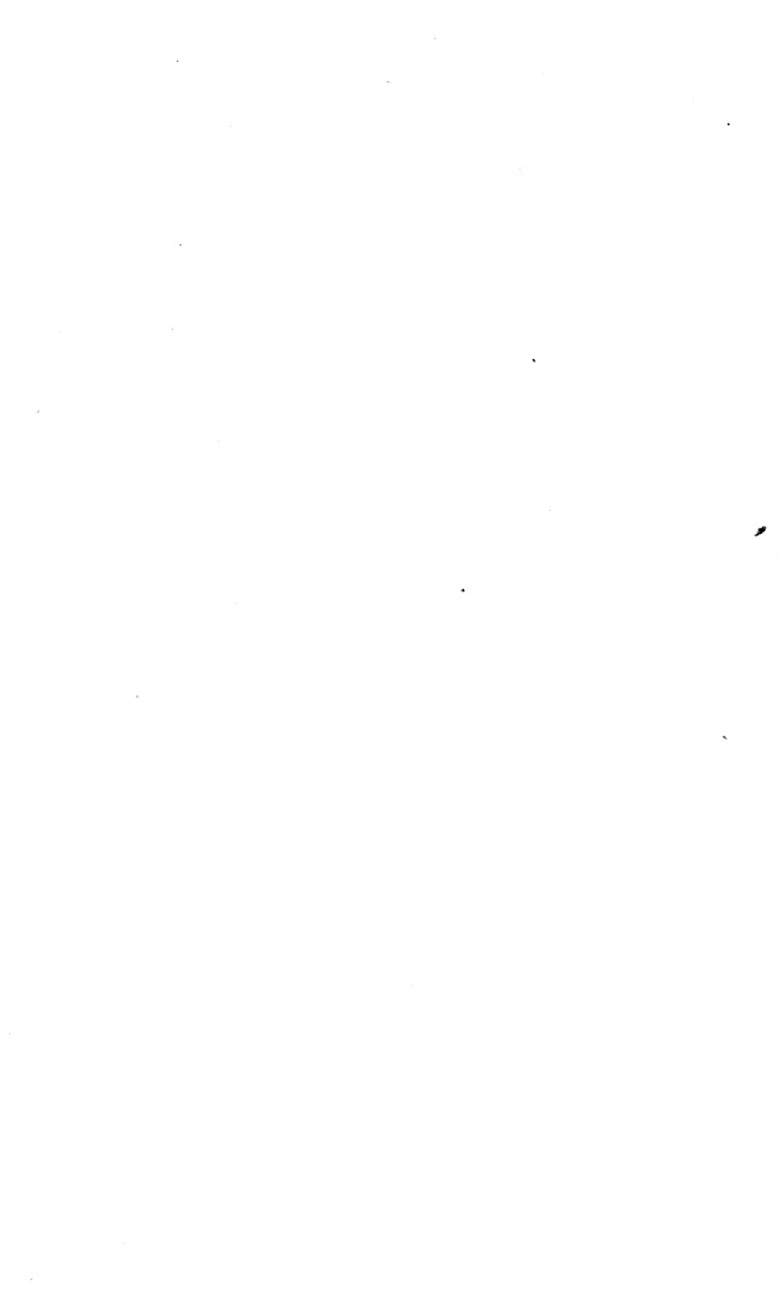
devil, will counteract his will, and prevent him from saving all his children from sin, and securing their endless happiness, according to his desire. Far different this testimony of the apostle. No anxious fear is expressed, nor even the shadow of a doubt. He recognizes the infinite wisdom of God, to devise all the means necessary to the accomplishment of his purpose, and his infinite power to render those means effectual. Nor need we be disturbed by doubt, if we recognize the same divine wisdom and power. On the contrary, we may rejoice in the full assurance of faith that God will accomplish his design, "according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather to-

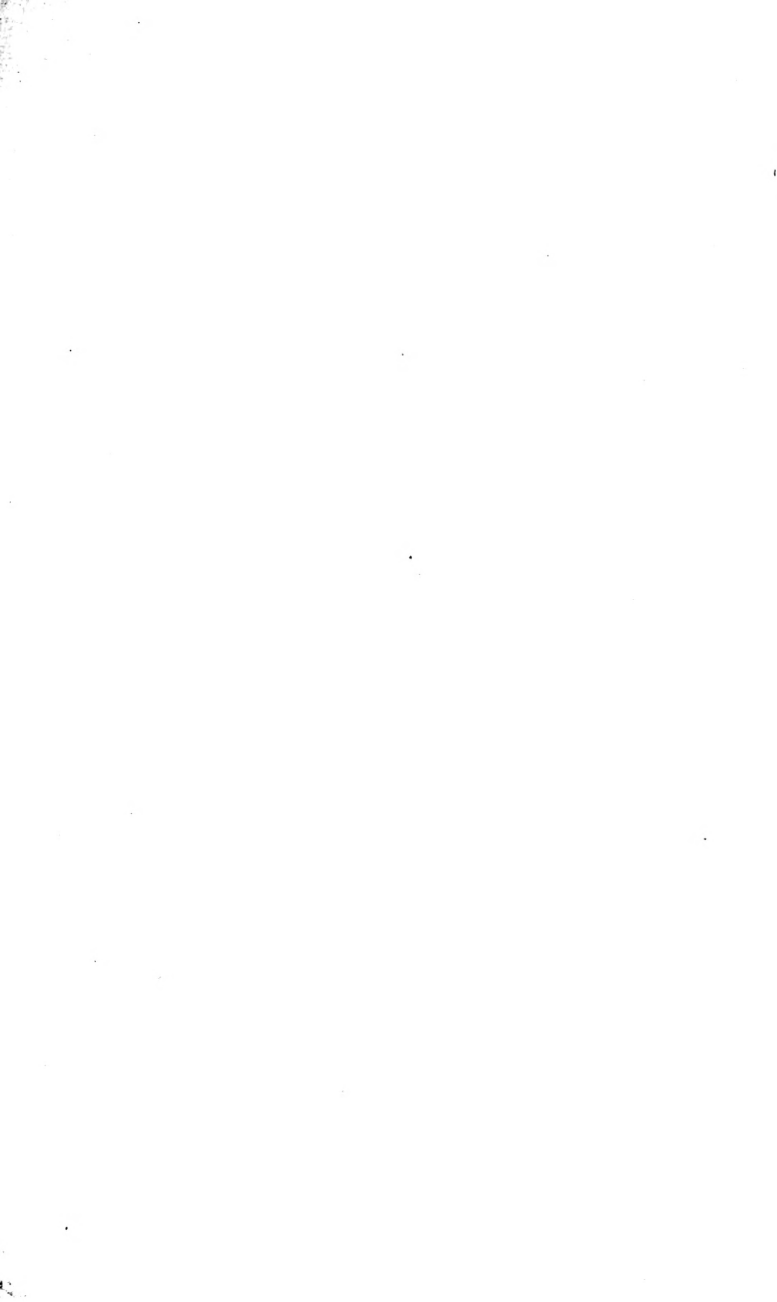
gether in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." Eph. i. 9, 10. Having such faith, with grateful and joyful and confiding hearts, we may offer the apostolic doxology, saying, "Now unto him that is able to keep all his children from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." We may also lift up our hearts and our voices in the triumphant exclamation, "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honor to him." Rev. xix. 6, 7.











Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00029 3128

Date Due

[illegible]

1598LI

PE

10-02-07 32180

608

MC

**THE** **Group**







